SOME VICTORIAN WOMEN

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25 NOV 1947
18 DEC 1947
27 MAY 1948
10 JUL 1948
22 FEB 1949
30 APR 1949
6 FEB 1950
24 MAY 1950
8 APR 1952
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5 FEB 1973
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SOME VICTORIAN WOMEN

Mrs. Langtry
when she first
appeared in public.

SOME VICTORIAN WOMEN

GOOD, BAD, AND INDIFFERENT.

BY

Harry Furniss

LONDON
JOHN LANE THE BODLEY HEAD LIMITED

HIGHGATE
INSTITUTION
LITERARY & SCIENTIFIC

First published in 1923

6696
920

Made and Printed in Great Britain. Richard Clay & Sons, Ltd., Printers, Bungay, Suffolk.

TO

MY WIFE

THE BEST OF THEM ALL

CONTENTS

CHAP.		PAGE
I.	SOME WOMEN WHO WROTE	1
II.	MORE WOMEN WHO WROTE	23
III.	SOME VICTORIAN ACTRESSES	45
IV.	SOME WOMEN ARTISTS	77
V.	SOME WOMEN MODELS	96
VI.	SOME WOMEN WORKERS	114
VII.	A WORD ABOUT SOME OLD WOMEN	135
VIII.	SOME PRETTY WOMEN I REMEMBER	149
IX.	PAINTERS OF WOMEN I HAVE MET	163
X.	SOMETHING ABOUT DRESS	176
XI.	SOME HOSTESSES	185
XII.	SOME BAD WOMEN	203

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	TO FACE PAGE
MRS. LANGTRY WHEN SHE FIRST APPEARED IN PUBLIC	*Frontispiece*
LADY WILDE	2
SIR WILLIAM AND LADY WILDE	4
MISS FLORENCE MARRYAT	10
OUIDA	16
LUCAS MALET	18
MRS. HUMPHRY WARD	20
"JOHN OLIVER HOBBES"	24
MRS. OLIPHANT	34
MARY MAPES DODGE	38
MRS. ROUSBY AS THE MISSING GAINSBOROUGH	44
LYDIA THOMPSON	46
MISS GENEVIÈVE WARD AS QUEEN MARGARET	48
MADAME VESTRIS	50
ADA CAVENDISH	52
MISS LITTON AS ROSALIND	54
HARRIET COVENEY AND CLARA JECKS	56
VIOLET CAMERON	58
MISS FORTESCUE	60
KATE VAUGHAN	62
MARY ANDERSON	64
MRS. BROWN POTTER	66
LADY TREE	68
ELLEN TERRY AND IRVING IN "KING ARTHUR"	70
MISS LUCY KEMP-WELCH	78
LADY ALMA TADEMA	82
MRS. JOPLING ROWE	84
KATE GREENAWAY	86
MISS ALICE HAVERS AND HER MODEL	88
LADY BUTLER	92

TO FACE PAGE

BLUEBEARD'S WIFE 98
"AIN'T YER GOING TO PINK IT?" 104
MAUD BRANSCOMBE. 112
WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE MEETING, ST. JAMES'S HALL—"TURN HIM OUT!" (MOSTLY APPEARED IN "PUNCH") . . 114
MRS. FAWCETT 116
THE COOK 122
MISS FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE 132
MRS. KEELEY 138
MARY HOWITT 142
LADY BURDETT-COUTTS AT A SALE AT CHRISTIE'S (A CORNER OF A DRAWING IN "PUNCH") 144
MRS. HOWARD PAUL 146
MRS. CORNWALLIS WEST 150
LADY DUDLEY 154
LADY ARTHUR BUTLER 160
LORD MILLAIS 162
WILLIAM QUILLER ORCHARDSON, R.A. 166
ARTHUR HACKER, R.A. 170
MARCUS STONE, R.A. 172
"PITY US! THIS IS ALL WE CAN SEE OF THE STAGE" . 174
FROM CRINOLINE TO TAILOR-MADE 178
LADY JEUNE 186
LADY ST. HELIER 190
THE COUNTESS OF ABERDEEN 196
"IN A MOMENT ALL THE BEAUTIES SURROUNDED CLAUDE" . 208
MADELEINE SMITH 212
MRS. MANNING THE MURDERESS FASCINATING A STRANGER IN A TRAIN WHILE ESCAPING FROM ARREST . . . 218
"LADY SARAH FURNIVAL" 222
I.D.B.s 224

SOME VICTORIAN WOMEN

CHAPTER I

SOME WOMEN WHO WROTE

THE first poetess I ever met was a very remarkable one. I was but a boy and not far from where my parents lived in Dublin was a large pretentious house at the corner of Merrion Square where Sir William Wilde, Oculist and Otologist, and Lady Wilde, otherwise known as "Speranza," poetess, resided. They were the parents of Oscar Wilde. Lady Wilde interested me inasmuch as her grandfather, the famous Archdeacon Elgee, who as a very old man and Rector of Wexford had christened me. Oscar Wilde, and his brother Wil[illegible] I recollect seeing in Eton jackets when home for their holidays. Lady Wilde was a very tall and stoutishly inclined woman, with the appearance and air of a tragedy queen of the Mrs. Crummles type. She might have walked out of the pages of *Nicholas Nickleby*, in fact, R. H. Sherrard in his life of Oscar Wilde rather hints that she did. I have the passage handy in one of the black boxes where I throw foolish things to deal with when opportunity arises, and one of these is reserved for those modern writers who belittle the most popular author of the last century—Charles Dickens. Here is the passage:

"The great caricaturist, Dickens, whose notice few of his distinguished contemporaries escaped, seems to

have studied some of Lady Wilde's peculiarities from afar, and the results of his observations may be found here and there in his books."

The caricaturist, Dickens! the old twentieth-century sneer of the absurd superior person.

And yet here is Lady Wilde, an actual person, described thus in this life of her son: "A very tall woman—she looked over six feet high—she wore a long crimson silk gown which swept the floor . . . round what had been a waist an Oriental scarf embroidered with gold was twisted. The long, massive, handsome face was plastered with powder. Over her blue-black, glossy hair was a gilt crown of laurels. Her throat was bare, so were her arms, but they were covered with quaint jewellery. On her broad chest was festooned a series of large miniature brooches, evidently family portraits . . . this gave her the appearance of a walking family mausoleum. She wore white kid gloves, held a scent-bottle, a lace handkerchief, and a fan."

Lady Wilde, had she been cleaned up and plainly and rationally dressed, would have made a remarkably fine model of the *grande dame*, but with all her paint and tinsel and tawdry tragedy-queen get-up she was a walking burlesque of motherhood. Her husband resembled a monkey, a miserable-looking little creature, who, apparently unshorn and unkempt, looked as if he had been rolling in the dust. Monkeys were in those days dressed up and accompanied organ-grinders of the oily type. A Dublin woman, soliciting alms, was sharply rebuked by Sir William in Merrion Square—"Go away,

LADY WILDE

go away, you beggars are a perfect nuisance." "Beggar indade!" squealed the woman. "Beggar! an' what are y'self thin when out with your I-talian masther wid a chain on ye."

Opposite to their pretentious dwelling in Dublin were the Turkish Baths, but to all appearance neither Sir William nor his lady walked across the street. At all the public functions these two peculiar objects appeared in their dust and eccentricity. Living caricatures, in evidence that neither Hogarth nor Dickens in their respective periods had the need to invent characters. They are ready to hand in real life, needing only a little trouble and a modicum of perspicacity to find them.

Their son Oscar did not, in this particular peculiarity, take after his parents. His linen was conspicuous by its glossy whiteness. It was said he used his capacious cuffs to jot down his epigrams.

When he produced his famous play *A Woman of No Importance* I inquired: "Who is Mr. Oscar Wilde's washerwoman?" What a cynic she must be by this time? When she gets up his fine linen she must pause before she dips the expansive shirt cuffs of her æsthetically sarcastic customer into the seething soap-suds, for has she not during the last six months beheld startling epigrams hastily pencilled on the critic's cuffs? As, for example, "Men marry because they are tired, women because they are curious," and "If a man wants to get into society he must either feed people, amuse people, or shock people." But surely the old washerwoman would hurriedly dip the pencilled linen into the tub when she

deciphered the following: "The happiness of a married man depends on the woman he has not married," and it must rather shock the worthy dame's sensibilities to read: "A bad man is the sort of man who admires innocence and a bad woman is the sort of woman that a man never gets tired of." I can picture to myself the soap-suds flying when the old lady's eye is met by "All married men live like bachelors, and all bachelors like married men," and she must have smiled when she read: "A well-tied tie is the first serious step in life." But I have no doubt that, like Sir Beerbohm Tree, the washerwoman was "very proud to be associated with this work of art." The work of art is "a new and original play of modern life," entitled "A Woman of no Importance." It certainly was new and original insomuch as it was totally devoid of action. It was beautifully dressed, and the excellent Haymarket company sat about on garden seats and drawing-room chairs, letting off Oscar Wilde's sarcastic epigrams by the dozen, evidently, as I suggest, a collection of Oscar's happy thoughts dotted down at odd times on his shirt-cuffs, and now produced strung together, without apparently any other reason than that of demonstrating the cleverness of the author.

Sir William Wilde was a wicked old man, there was no attempt to disguise the fact that he had many illegitimate children, one was in his own profession and had a good practice. With all the queer ways of this eccentric couple, it is no wonder that Oscar, their genius of a son, grew into an eccentric unnatural being. It would have been more surprising if he had not done so.

SIR WILLIAM AND LADY WILDE

In those Victorian days most of the poetesses and authoresses affected the long flowing black velvet gown, low cut bodices, lace and jewellery. Even such a practical authoress as Mrs. J. H. Riddell was so attired when I, as a youth, lunched with her at Leyton, Essex, in the early seventies. On her writing-table an ordinary cup and saucer answered the purpose of an inkstand, the cup was half-full of ink and half a dozen feather pens lay diagonally across the saucer—these little affectations were a survival of the literary lady Thackeray described so well a generation before in his *Character Sketches* as " The fashionable Authoress."

While writing this I was sent the literary magazine, *The Irish Book Lover*, for January 1920, which opens with some letters I wrote to a literary friend of mine in my youth, containing my first impression of Mrs. Riddell, under date of August 11th, 1873 :

" I like London very much indeed, and am sure will like it more the longer I reside here. I have only had my boxes over a few days, so at present am busy preparing my samples, if I might call them so. Having an introduction to a Mrs. Riddell, an authoress who wrote *George Geith*, *City and Suburb*, and edited *St. Paul's*, etc., etc., I called on her, and had the honour and real pleasure of her company for several hours. I took lunch with her at her rural seat at Leyton, Essex, and came away with a note of introduction to Mrs. Ross Church, Editor of *London Society*, who unfortunately had left for the Continent for some months. Mrs. Riddell is a very charming and fine woman : she gave me several ' tips '—woman's

'tips' I ought to add—about literary circles. She is to ask me to some of their Bohemian parties, and take me with her to be introduced to all the 'big-wigs.' As you might expect, she is very severe on her sex's endeavours in writing. Mrs. —— is 'simply a brute,' she throws in bits of religion to slip her fodder down the public throat. She says there is not a magazine in London paying, the libraries destroy the sale: they are too dear. But more anon."

Mrs. Riddell had made a great reputation with her "prize novel," *George Geith*, but she was unhappily married, at least, I believe her husband through some queer way in business was resting somewhere at his country's expense. This led Mrs. R. to work desperately hard, and by doing so she indirectly let me into a by-way in Bohemia—I have unfortunately come across a good many since—and that was how to publish (she published under another name) catch-advertisement ventures. I illustrated one profusely in the Caldecottian style, which brought in a number of advertisements, but only a few copies were printed—thus saving paper and printing—and I never received a penny for my work, or the advertisers much show for their money.

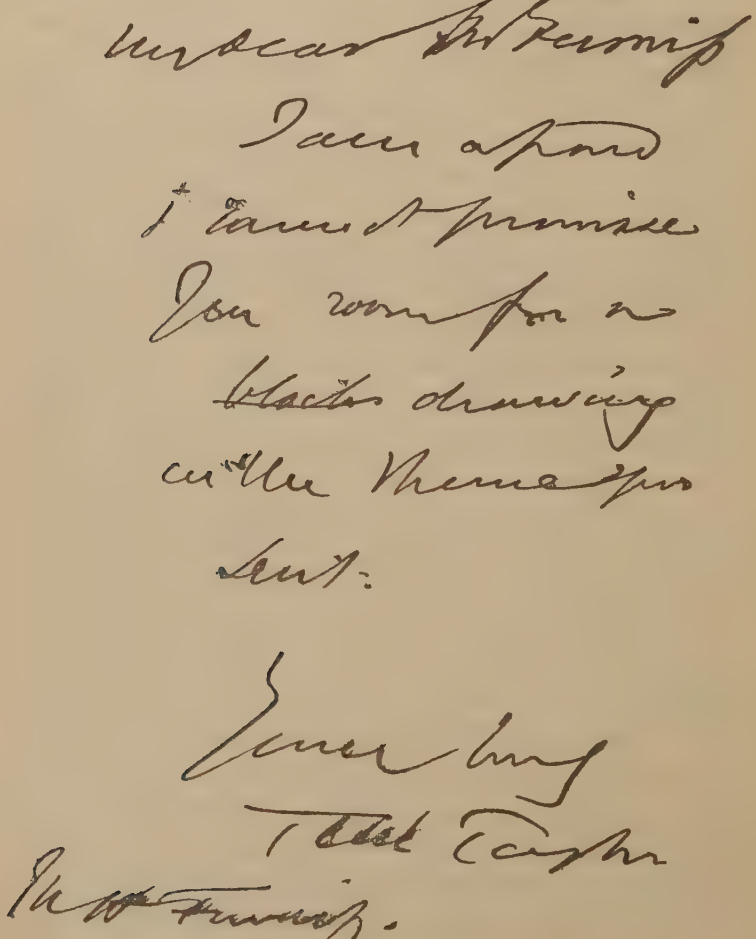
Another literary lady at the same time showed me another by-way, which thus easily opened the question with me—Do men write their own literary contributions?

When I was a friendless and ambitious youth, arrived for the first time in London, I carried in my pocket next to my rapidly pulsating heart a letter from Tom Taylor, editor of *Punch*, from himself to himself giving me his address, and a request to call and lunch with him on my

arrival. In consequence, I wended my way to Lavender Sweep, Clapham, where I found a house with india-rubber tubing tacked on to the hall door, to keep out draughts—and draughtsmen. Mr. Taylor was not at home. Subsequently I received an apologetic note, but no invitation.

Later on I met a literary lady, a friend of Mr. Taylor's, at the first "At Home" to which I was invited in London, at the house of Mrs. Ross Church, better known to the general public as Florence Marryat, the novelist, and I told her that although Tom Taylor had induced me to come to London he did not seem to trouble himself much about me. Her description of T. T. was not particularly complimentary. She said that he knew little about current Art, and that in fact she wrote most of his criticisms. I was sceptical about that point. "Well," she said, "you will see that I have a deal of influence over him. He will be at your rooms at ten o'clock to-morrow morning." *And he was.* He was a dull heavy man and anything but communicative or encouraging. For fully five minutes he shook me by the hand, until I feared his spectacles would have dropped off, but I noticed they were tied on to his head with a piece of string. It struck me that he was thinking of anything but of me; after a time I managed to show him my sketches, which he himself had asked me to do, when I met him in Dublin. He offered no criticism, but shook my hand for another five minutes, which proved to me that the lady who had sent him was right; he departed without saying anything and I never saw either Tom Taylor or the

lady again. I sent him ideas for *Punch* once or twice which he rejected in this style. I kept them as specimens of untidy graphology, for, with the exception of James Payn, his writing was the most indistinct among literary men.



As soon as he departed and a new editor was appointed to *Punch*, I joined the staff of that periodical, and at the "Table" caused some little amusement by my imitation of Tom Taylor, under whose editorship *Punch* had become so dull.

I recollect a rather pretty little woman I used to meet at Tinsley's, the publisher. She wrote for him, but she also wrote other novels, that she declared—and Tinsley assured me he knew her statement to be true—she sold to Edmund Yates, who published them as his own productions. When she died I read with much interest the obituary notice of her written by Yates, which I, reading between the lines, was fully convinced confirmed the strange statement she herself had made. Anyway he never published another novel—any more than some of the wives of celebrated painters, who having become exhibitors themselves refrain from exhibiting after their husband's death.

I was informed by a very able lady journalist, who was for a long time Paris correspondent of a leading London daily, that she came across Oscar Wilde in Paris, after his imprisonment in Reading Gaol. He was cowed, broken-down, and miserable, he implored her to call and see him, which she did, and he began to read to her a new play he had written, but just as he had finished the first act she was called away on professional work, and before she could again visit O. W.'s lodgings he had passed away. Some time after she saw a very brilliant and successful play which was attracting all play-going peoples. The name of a very clever dramatist, who had

already written attractive plays with much success but in a different style, was given as the author, who had turned his talents into a new channel and made a fresh departure. My lady friend assured me that Act I was identically the same, word for word, as the one scene read to her by Oscar Wilde.

So it comes to this—as far as I can judge—that some critics were not partially, but entirely, ignorant of their matter; clever journalists posed as novelists with books written by literary lady "ghosts"; pictures publicly exhibited were often not painted by those who signed them; plays were not always written by those who, for the sake of convenience, appended their names; Cabinet Ministers did not write the descriptive articles applauded by the public; nor did high legal luminaries always write their own books. These, my dear readers, are some of the by-ways and queer ways which had better not be followed too closely—some end in *culs-de-sac* and most of them are unsavoury.

Florence Marryat was a daughter of the famous writer, Captain Marryat, and she was, as I say, one of my earliest friends in London; in fact, she gave me my first work.

She was a good-natured, energetic woman, and a prolific writer—but not a great one. She was at one time an operatic singer and then an actress, subsequently she became an entertainer and lecturer, but she was not great in any one subject. She was principally known as a believer in Spiritualism. That was her latest phase and one that took on. Her last books were all on that

Miss Florence Marryat

subject—*There is no Death*, *The Risen Dead*, a novel, and *The Spirit World*.

I used to go to the séances in her house, when she started the Spirit business, but I never saw anything out of the common, and I never read her books. Known as Mrs. Ross Church when I first met her, she decided to marry someone else, and discarded her husband, who I think was in the Army. Anyway, she sent all her friends and acquaintances, myself included, a statement in cold printer's ink, informing us that she was not divorced, but that in future she wished to be known as Mrs. Lean. This little piece of eccentricity fell into her husband's solicitor's hands and thus ended the Church business. Edmund Downey was William Tinsley's, the publisher's, right-hand man in the late seventies and early eighties. In his interesting reminiscences of those Bohemian days he gives a very characteristic description of Florence Marryat. It so happened the authoress had written to the publisher to say she wanted him to publish her new novel, and as he decided to be " out " when she called, he asked Downey to see her and find out what she wanted. Downey was not acquainted with Miss Marryat, and therefore asked how he could recognize her if she called and refused to give her name as visitors frequently did.

" You'll recognize her easily enough," said the publisher. " She is a tall, striking-looking woman, and she'll talk to you like a man." The lady called, she looked round the office, and then, addressing Downey, said, " Is Bill in ? " Downey fancied the inquirer might

be Miss Marryat, and replied that Mr. Tinsley was not in and asked her if he could do anything for her. "I must see Bill himself," she said. "Tell the old bounder I called." "You're Miss Marryat," Downey ventured to remark. "Yes, but stop! How the devil do you know I'm Miss Marryat? I never saw you before."

Florence Marryat was a bright, happy-go-lucky writer when I was a boy, and on my arrival in London she was editing a popular magazine in the office of Sampson Low, Marston, Rivington and Searle, a firm only equalled in the number of partners by the number of stone steps which ascended to their first-floor offices. Next door to these offices (now occupied by the Linotype Company) was the "London Restaurant," and a very good restaurant too!—situated over Partridge and Cooper's at the corner of Chancery Lane. To that excellent place the fair editor of *London Society* and her favoured contributors frequently adjourned for lunch. I was one of the party, and with pleasure I record that on several occasions I stood the treat. "That will not do," said my editor; "you are a young man and you cannot afford it." I remained obdurate. "Well, I must repay you. So here goes—I'll kiss you!" There was no means of escape, as another contributor held the door. I merely mention this little incident to show that, in those Bohemian days, business was carried on in a much more agreeable way than now.

In later years I met literary women in a different environment, and outside Bohemia. One I was asked

to meet at dinner for a special reason, which I should like to record. The lady who desired to "renew" my acquaintance was the celebrated authoress, Mrs. Archibald Little, whose *Intimate China* had just then made a great hit.

She is a delightful and interesting lady, and I was curious to know why she had so mysteriously wished to meet me without disclosing her object. As we sat at dinner the mystery was disclosed. I was, so she declared, a man with a past. She knew, though others did not, a secret in my life. She had been so intimate with China there was nothing she did not know, and one thing she did know was the fact that I had been forced to leave the country. She put it carefully and mildly to me, that my departure was caused by my caricatures of high persons who demanded my instant removal.

"Perhaps it will interest you to know, Mrs. Little, that although I have travelled much I have never been in China."

"I know, Mr. Furniss, you wish to forget it."

"It happened a long time ago as you have yourself admitted," I remarked. "So you could have heard it only from old residents, and although I began life very early—I was on the press at the age of fourteen—yet at the date you are referring to——"

She was all attention and smiled, thinking I was about to confess the truth.

"I was exactly three years of age. I could not have been very dangerous even if I were that extraordinary infant prodigy you describe."

The facts were these: My father was married twice, I being the youngest son of his second wife. The Furniss Mrs. Little had confused with me was my half-brother, a young man who was five-and-twenty years of age when I was born. He was in the Merchant Service —a very fine, handsome, talented fellow who gave up the sea for a time and settled in China. He was evidently an Admirable Crichton, for he was a clever artist and writer, he founded the Hong-Kong *Punch*. He was also a splendid singer, and a good actor. He opened a theatre and played in the old burlesque of the Italian Operas then so popular. I knew little of him except that he was a reckless, clever fellow who eventually returned to sea life and died when I was still a boy.

For one reason alone I was glad to pass as a very old man with a past, for it led to an interesting meeting with a very charming authoress.

I cannot say I ever *met* Ouida, but I followed her once, without knowing it, along a few yards of a corridor at the Langham Hotel. I happened to be calling upon an American acquaintance, some time early in the eighties, and I observed in front of me a curious figure of a woman or child—I could not determine which—rather short in stature, with reddish hair lying loose on her shoulders. She was wearing a straight gown of nondescript character. As she turned, I noticed she had a large nose and small eyes, and was no longer young. I asked my friend if there was a lunatic in the room next to his, and he replied there was a Frenchwoman with a brain-storm, who imagined she was Ouida; and

we both heartily laughed at the idea. Subsequently, of course, I discovered my mistake.

I never could read Ouida's novels with patience; when I was young her name was held up as being typical of everything objectionable in literature.

I did, however, read with immense pleasure and admiration "A Leaf in a Storm," one of several stories collected under the title of *A Dog of Flanders*, which dealt with incidents in the Franco-Prussian war. I was about fifteen or sixteen years of age when the war took place, and followed with intense interest Ouida's description of the brutal Germans. Baron Tauchnitz, who published the Continental edition, strongly objected to this description of the brutal treatment of the French peasants by German soldiers, but Ouida gallantly refused to alter her story.

Lady St. Helier (well known in Bohemian days as Lady Jeune), who was better acquainted with celebrities, both men and women, than any other London hostess, writes:

"It is always unwise to have preconceived ideas as to the character and appearance of any distinguished person."

This statement prefaces the description of her first meeting with Ouida. She anticipated "a graceful woman of middle age, with traces of great beauty, and brilliant conversation"—in fact, an ideal Egeria. In place of that, she found Ouida "small, insignificant-looking, with no pretension to beauty, her harsh voice, and manner almost grotesque in its affectation, completed the destruction of my ideal."

In one particular instance women are cleverer than men, women appreciate their own good or attractive points, and lay themselves out to make the best of them. "She was," adds Lady St. Helier, "very vain, and inordinately proud of her remarkably small hands and beautiful feet, which she displayed with great prodigality." I never knew a woman with a pretty foot and ankle that did not show it to advantage.

Ouida was one of the most extraordinary creatures—man or woman—the world has known, her colossal vanity, her eccentricities, her extravagance, her unpleasant personality and her talents were well known. Being unable to pronounce her own name as a little child she called herself Ouida. She maintained that "The Public has no business with what my name is or is not. Ouida is all they have a right to know," and it was her characteristic reply when asked the origin of the name by which she became famous.

She liked to receive guests dressed in white satin seated in a red satin arm-chair, her feet stretched out to show their beautiful proportions, and, with an eye for effect, she usually made her mother dress in black.

She always dressed to fit the position of the heroine she was depicting at the time. Several writers have described her. William Allingham—Tennyson's friend and adviser, and himself a poet writes: "She was dressed in green silk, with a clever, sinister face, her hair down, small hands and feet and a voice like a carving-knife." And Henry James the novelist sums Ouida up thus: "She was *curious*, in a common, little way . . . of a most

OUIDA

uppish or dauntless little spirit of arrogance and independence . . . a little terrible and finally pathetic grotesque."

Ouida was introduced to an American lady, the wife of a celebrated American writer; after a short conversation Ouida, in her hard, uncompromsing way, abruptly said:

"You are American?"

"I guess that's so," replied the lady.

"I do not like Americans!" was Ouida's extraordinary rejoinder.

"Wall, that's vairy ungrateful of you, for it's we Americans, I guess, buy and read your filthy books."

The remark of Lady St. Helier that I have just quoted, concerning the disappointments attendant on preconceived notions of distinguished people, was anticipated by Maginn. William Maginn, that wayward Irish genius and wit, immortalized by Thackeray in *Pendennis*, said much the same thing as Lady St. Helier:

"The desire of becoming acquainted in the body with those from whose minds we have long received delight, is natural enough, as is also the exception to find in the one the 'outward and visible sign' of the 'inward and spiritual grace' we have known in the other. But this is a desire, often, if not always, productive of diasppointment, and could never, hardly, one would imagine, be more so than in the present instance." This Maginn wrote apropos of his disappointment on first seeing Miss Mitford.

In the good old Victorian days women writers remained

in the villages they were born in, and, like the Brontë sisters, were seldom seen in towns. Before the times of photography and illustrated papers perhaps no woman writer's appearance caused more comment and merriment than simple-minded Mary Russell Mitford, the author of *Our Village*, a series of papers which ran through the *Lady's Magazine* a hundred years ago, were subsequently collected in book form, and became famous. She has been described by her contemporaries as " short, rotund and unshapely."

S. C. Hall described her as a " stout little lady, tightened up in a shawl, a roly-poly figure, most vexatiously dumpy." Even the refined poetess " L. E. L." (Miss Landon) cried out when she beheld Miss Mitford for the first time: " Good heavens! A Sancho Panza in petticoats! "

Lucas Malet's father, Charles Kingsley, was a great friend of Miss Mitford and, as he lived near her in the country, frequently called at the celebrated woman's shabby little cottage to enjoy a rest and a chat. It was in the shabby little parlour that Talfourd, Haydon, the painter, Amelia Opie, Jane Porter, Cary and other celebrities met the shabby little clever woman.

I expected to find Miss Braddon, the authoress of *Lady Audley's Secret*, *Aurora Floyd* (which I devoured in my youth), *Dead Men's Shoes*, and *Asphodel*, a tall massive woman with an air of intense romance, with a strong face of a severe type, large dark dreamy eyes, a finely shaped nose, and firm lips; she would, I thought, be over-dressed, and slightly theatrical. This was how I

"LUCAS MALET"

pictured her in my mind's eye; when she invited me to make one of a party at lunch at her beautiful house at Richmond I had the surprise of my life. My hostess turned out to be a stout, merry, homely little woman with a short turned-up nose, a large mouth, little twinkling eyes, a big head and hair thin and cropped. In fact, if she had been a man she would have made an excellent comedian. She was a woman of the world with plenty to say, and could say it amusingly—hers was a strong character, with apparently not a vestige of romance in it.

When the great Tichborne case was, for years, almost the sole topic of conversation, and the claimant—a butcher from Wapping—posed as Roger Tichborne, a famous "scrap of paper" was found on which these memorable—and fatal—words were written:

"Some men has brains and no money, and some men has money and no brains. I think that the men who has money and no brains was made for the men who has brains and no money."

It is interesting to know that he had found this rough axiom in one of Miss Braddon's novels, and it was not, as every one thought and still thinks, the unaided emanation of his gigantic intellect.

One might expect to find that accomplished author, Lucas Malet, the daughter of Charles Kingsley, that beetle-browed, hawk-eyed, beak-nosed, Gladstonian type of man, the lady who had the audacity to write *The Wages of Sin*—the first of the modern school of lady novelists to throw a literary bomb into the centre of squeamish

people loaded with what she called " the great and cruel riddle of sex "—a masculine-looking woman of the severe Kingsley type; instead of which she is a pleasant, handsome woman with a keen sense of humour.

When I took over the *Pall Mall Budget* from Mr. Astor (the late Lord Astor) I renamed it the *New Budget*. I lost a fortune by it, as my predecessor had also done, but, then, being a millionaire, he could afford it—I could not. In the *New Budget* I published an appreciation of Lucas Malet, by one of my literary staff. It struck me as being very excellent, and it winds up in this way:

" Though your style is epigrammatic, and you love to convey your meaning in vivid, sparkling phrases, you are never betrayed into inane verbal antics, or mere contortions and inversions of language, in a vain striving after effect. Nowadays our writers are apt to mistake a mere jingle of words for a witty saying, and to write ' To be confident is not necessarily to be confidential,' or ' His caricatures were courtly rather than cautious,' with the proud assumption that they have been epigrammatic, instead of the sneaking consciousness that they have been inane. You never do that, and so one can read and re-read your novels with pleasure. But then, of course, you write very slowly. Perhaps if you were to set yourself to turn out books at the rate of two a year your epigrams would begin to ring false, and you would take to mistaking sound for sense and verbal gymnastics for wit, like the rest of us. I am sure I hope you will never try."

Mrs. Humphry Ward is moulded in the strong and

Mrs. Humphry Ward

unmistakable fine intellectual Arnold type—one can never mistake an Arnold. Some clever families run in distinctly marked types. The Terrys for instance. One can never mistake a Terry nose—that charming tip-tilted nose so fascinating in the pictures of Ellen Terry—any more than one can avoid noting the strong aquiline nose in the family of Arnolds; so conspicuous in the intellectual face of Mrs. Humphry Ward. Mrs. Humphry Ward opens her interesting volume of *A Writer's Recollections* with the following question: "Do we all become garrulous and confidential as we approach the gates of old age?" Of course we do, and my only regret is that that brilliant lady was neither garrulous nor confidential when I had the one opportunity of a pleasant—and to me—profitable chat.

The first time I met Mrs. Humphry Ward she was leaving her husband's study in their house in Russell Square as I entered unexpectedly under peculiar circumstances, an event which, as it turned out, was of great importance. One morning, just as I was getting on my horse for my daily ride in the spring of 1887, I received a note from Mr. Humphry Ward asking me for some particulars about myself for a work on "Men of the Time" he was compiling. It so happened I had just finished a most elaborate work, large framed pictures in black and white parodying the styles of all the Academicians of the day. Mr. Humphry Ward kindly visited my studio and was the first to see my *tour de force*. He wrote in the *Times* an important article heralding my venture, under the heading "An Artistic Joke," which

title I eventually adopted. This article appeared on the leader page, and caused such an interest that I had to employ police to keep the crowd—a half-crown a head crowd too—in order outside the "house full" gallery in Bond Street.

CHAPTER II

MORE WOMEN WHO WROTE

AMONG my earliest recollections were the pleasurable visits to a very distinguished Irish county family of the name of Lyster.

The household consisted of three sisters, all charming women, all well over six feet in height—they had one brother, an officer in India, and he was rather undersized! They were the children of Rear-Admiral Lyster, and after the gallant admiral's death found they were not in quite such affluent circumstances. One of the ladies—Annette—became an authoress. She wrote a fine sea-novel, *Riding out the Gale*, which was very well reviewed. I at that time had settled in London, and I received a letter from the authoress enclosing one from her publisher. This was a demand for sixty pounds, which it was stated was necessary to cover the loss of the publication of Miss Lyster's novel; as she had paid sixty pounds or more in advance to cover expenses, and as the venture had turned out apparently successful, she asked me to investigate the matter for her. Of course there are publishers and publishers, and in those days some of the smaller advertising publishing offices were mere spider parlours into which they invited the amateur writers. Miss Lyster's publisher, unfortunately, happened to be one of that sort.

I entered his office with a written authority to act for the author of the book. I was shown the books, which clearly recorded a loss of sixty pounds on the publication. "Very interesting," I said, "and somewhat ingenious, but I want to see your private books, those with the real record up-to-date."

I was refused this request, and we had a scene, but I left the office with a cheque for sixty pounds in my pocket which I duly sent off to the authoress.

Mrs. Craigie was one of the brightest literary women I have met. She was great at names; her own was Pearl Mary Teresa Craigie. She adopted the *nom de guerre* of John Oliver Hobbes; John because it was her father's and her son's name, Oliver because of the warring Cromwell, and Hobbes because it is homely. Her most ambitious novel bears the title, *The Gods, some Mortals, and Lord Wickenham*. She owed much to this eccentricity of names. The comic man gloried in it. It was parodied in the humorous and satirical press, and advertised in all manner of ways by reviewers and correspondents in the book reviewing press. Ladies besieged the subscription libraries to read the book merely to discover, if possible, the meaning of the title. They incidentally discovered some very bright and entertaining pages of writing; some of her other titles for her books, though shorter, are equally curious; for instance, *Some Emotions and a Moral*, and *The Worm that God Prepared*.

Mrs. Craigie was an American, educated in England and married young and unhappily, but she was fortunate

"John Oliver Hobbes"

in having a very charming and rich father who made a fortune by a world-advertised patent pill. His daughter was also his companion, and lived in his castle in the Isle of Wight. The ambitious authoress had every luxury money could obtain, even to a literary journal, the *Academy*, which was certainly not exploited to sell pills. Money is a great asset to a budding authoress and dramatist and covers a multitude of failures.

I doubt, however, if Pearl Richards of Chelsea, Mass., near Boston would ever have become famous as an authoress had she been fortunate in her married life. So many women I have met who were authoresses only thought of taking up writing when their husbands had come a cropper financially, or morally—when through necessity or caprice they drowned their sorrow in the flowing ink-pot. Mrs. Craigie had the means and the leisure to go in for a course of training before entering the arena of literature, which few of her sisters of the pen have had any chance of doing. She studied Greek and Latin at University College, London, where her professors, " knowing her ambition to excel as a writer," were her keen and unsparing critics, " helping her to the formation of her style." She travelled in Italy and elsewhere to gain the literary spirit like George Eliot. She even changed from the environment of nonconformity to the more inspiring atmosphere of the Roman Catholic Church. She avoided her natural antipathies and she eschewed all recreations (except the theatre) indoors or out of doors. She was a literary exotic, she was an American with American artificial aims and pleasures,

she was almost anti-English. Had she adopted England in place of criticizing it she would have been a healthier writer and physically a stronger woman. For instance, no healthy woman could write thus: "Women are materialists by constitution; the coarsest Englishman is never so coarse as the average English matron who lives respectably." She lacked the calm confidence and strength of the Arnolds, so discernible in Mrs. Humphry Ward, or the hereditary adroitness of Miss Marie Corelli, which struck me when I met them. Mrs. Craigie was, in a word, a spoilt child of her admiring father, the spoilt child of her literary critics; she received their advice with pretty pouting and wrote them lectures if they criticized her books or her plays. She had, I admit, a fascinating manner, she was witty and clever—but, above all, she was rich. Authoresses who live in castles, and have fathers making fortunes out of trade, can afford to throw stones with impunity. What she did inherit from her father was just the quality clever women writing in a bed-sitting-room lack, and that was business instinct. She knew how to work on the weakness of mere man, particularly if the man happened to be a critic. Her father, as a business man, writes of her with pride as follows:

"Her knowledge of business surprised many of her friends, for she certainly had a masculine grasp of business matters, and was extremely resourceful, tactful, and firm in any negotiation respecting her books and plays." Here is a specimen of her resourceful reply to her publisher when he had evidently objected to her terms:

"Authors are, no doubt, a grasping and ungrateful *and* extravagant set! But if they are not extravagant they get dull; and if they are dull, they write stupid books; and if they write stupid books—what does the publisher say?"

When I, by false representations, took over the *Pall Mall Budget* and lost six thousand pounds of my hard-earned money in five months, the editor, a friend of John Oliver Hobbes, suggested running a very short story of hers in two instalments. I agreed to her price—eighty guineas—but when the MSS. came in I had a specimen of the fair authoress's business capacity. It was marked one hundred guineas! So I promptly returned it. John Oliver Hobbes, being a delicate woman, hypersensitive, emotional, and almost erotic, had the wrong temperament for dramatic work and should have confined her efforts to writing novels. Her plays were really staged essays. When her play *The Flute of Pan* met with an unfavourable reception (the fate of most of her plays) she wrote: "If there is to be any science in the composition of the dialogue, any refinement in the situations, and delicacy in the performance it will not carry beyond the dress circle;" this unconscious confession of weakness was apropos of "booing": the gallery on the first night booed the performance unmercifully, she declared, solely because they could not hear what the actors were saying—in fact, because they did not "play to the gallery." By that she meant "speak to the gallery"—playing to the gallery has quite a different meaning.

My daughter and I were leaving the Savoy Hotel late one evening after dinner when we came across Mrs. Craigie in a great state of excitement. Her new play was produced that night, but in place of running the risk of another booing she had prepared a magnificent supper for her friends, the dramatic critics, and showed us the artistic way in which the room was decorated for the occasion with great pride. Yes, Mrs. Craigie's father was right, his daughter had a thorough masculine grasp of business methods.

Her attempt to contribute to *Punch* was peculiar. She sent a short humorous article to the editor (Burnand), and to her delight received a proof, which she was asked to revise—" although the article was not to be considered as finally accepted until its appearance in the pages of the paper, when payment would be sent." To her bitter disappointment it never appeared and she was never paid for it, a pretty unfair and ungallant way for *Punch* to treat a lady. Subsequently Sir Francis Burnand made her acquaintance and possibly discovered that, like himself, Mrs. Craigie was a convert to Roman Catholicism; anyway, he suggested her becoming a female Thackeray redivivus, and contributing a series on " Snobesses," " in the Thackeray manner," but once bit, etc. Mrs. Craigie's style was certainly not Thackeray's—she thought herself it was more in the style of Meredith—the only thing that recalls Thackeray is the fact that, like him, she attempted lecturing in the United States, and like him she got sick of it, and ran away back to England, leaving her tour unfinished.

It was in the St. Gothard's Tunnel, some thirty-five years ago, I sat in the corner of a railway carriage in the company of the pioneers of Technical Instruction in England. The Parliamentary Easter recess was on, and the committee on Technical Instruction had taken advantage of the holiday to tour Tyrol, Northern Italy, and other Continental places in which technical instruction was given in the midst of delightful surroundings. The member of the Government responsible for this tour happened to be a friend of mine, and had arranged that I should be allowed to accompany the special commission on their trip—purely, of course, as an outsider. Thus my modesty in secreting myself in the corner. There may have been another reason, their technical talk did not interest me. It was therefore a relief to me when one of the council joined us at the mouth of St. Gothard's Tunnel, Sir Philip Magnus, accompanied by another outsider, his wife. Lady Magnus is a very delightful and clever woman, and being a Jewess she is also very inquisitive; she spotted me at once, crossed over to where I sat and in a moment, though we were in a raking tunnel, opened fire:

"You are Mr. Furniss?"

"Yes."

"You and I are to be friends, we have nothing to do with these horrid parliamentary committee people."

I agreed.

"You are married."

"I am."

"I knew you were—you look so very happy."

"Indeed, that professor over there does not look happy."

"A bilious attack, that's all; never mind him; tell me, is your wife pretty?"

"A man never knows what his wife is like, you had better ask some one else; she is not pretty—she is pleasing."

"You an artist and not marry a beauty!"

"No, we hire beauty to sit at one shilling an hour."

"Had she money?"

"Not a penny."

"Then why did you marry her?"

"Because I have sisters, and a young man with sisters is generally sensible in matrimonial affairs."

"Any children?"

"A few boys; one girl."

"Regret that?"

"No; for boys invariably take after their mother, girls after their father."

"I can vary this—that if you have a daughter you and she will be boon companions."

A remark which time proved a wonderful perspicacity on the part of my delightful travelling companion.

She then crossed over to my friend, the chairman of the party, and said:

"I like your friend, Mr. Furniss, he is so very confiding."

When I returned to England after this pleasant tour with the Royal Commission on Technical Instruction I found my wife with the children in a cottage at Hasle-

mere, whither she had taken them for a holiday. The first evening I was there my wife and I were walking along the high-road, and I was relating to her the incidents of my journey, and describing my new acquaintances—Lady M. in particular—and wondering if I should ever see that delightful companion again, when a brougham which had just passed us drew up and out stepped that identical lady!

"What a coincidence!" she cried, as she ran towards us. "Is this your wife? I am stopping down here with a charming lady, Mrs. Hunter."* And there and then she bundled my wife into the brougham. "This is Mrs. Furniss. I'll bring the little man along—we'll walk, and get to Meadfield in time for dinner."

This was the beginning of a very pleasurable friendship with one of the most charming households in the county. Lady Magnus wrote an account of her trip through Austrian Tyrol, "From Shadow to Sunshine," for one of the magazines and I illustrated it. She is an accomplished writer, but contributes to magazines as a recreation more than as a professional proposition. The money she receives for her writing she informed me she spent on knick-knacks and things of beauty with which to adorn her picturesque boudoir. "You are sitting now on 'Good Words,'" she remarked to me when I called one day. I rose uneasily. "I am awfully sorry, but I did not see the magazine on the chair—in fact I do not see it now!" "Of course you don't," she laughingly replied. "I call that chair 'Good Words' because I

* Now Lady Hunter.

bought it with the money I received for a short article. Just come nearer, for I am frightfully deaf; here, sit on the 'Fortnightly'—a sofa—" while I show you the 'Pall Mall.'"

She handed me a beautiful silver frame with her charming daughter's portrait in it. "And where are the boys' photos?" I asked. "Oh, they are in the 'Saturday Review,'" handing me another gorgeous frame. She had her feet on a nicely carved stool, but I imagined that purchase might have some unpleasant meaning, so I did not inquire its name.

I sometimes take a walk over the beautiful Sussex hills, close to where I live, to one of the prettiest spots in England, appropriately known as Fairlight. Nestling in a sylvan corner of the crossways, and commanding a magnificent view of the Sussex downs and coast, is an ideal little old house, in a charmingly wooded garden. Here far from the madding crowd lives and writes one of the most prolific authoresses of our day—Mrs. Coulson Kernahan—the wife of the powerful writer and essayist, and who is, like her, a delightful personality. They are two busy bees in one of the prettiest literary hives in Britain. How busy Mrs. Kernahan must be, may be gathered from the fact that though still young-looking, and attractive with clear rosy cheeks, sparkling intelligent eyes and rich brown hair, she has already published no less than forty novels!

Her life has been a busy one and, like Mrs. Humphry Ward, in University environment. She was educated at University College under the late Sir Henry Morley;

she attended lectures at Cambridge, where her first husband, Professor G. T. Bettany, was a Don. The MS. of her first novel, *The House of Rimmon*, she showed to her friend, Sir Walter Besant, who walked off with it to a publisher, and highly recommended it. It was a great success and ran through three editions. John Long, the publisher, started business by producing her novel *Trewinnot of Guy's*, a good start too, for it ran through seven editions, and since then Mrs. Coulson Kernahan has commissions for novels sufficient to keep her busy for a couple of years or more. There is no "knocking off so much stuff" per day in her case. She does not dictate, as so many busy authoresses do, nor does she employ the typist, she writes the most wonderful hand, which shows steadiness, thought, and careful manipulation, and beats any typing—her practice in Greek in her early days accounts for the characterization of her writing.

In one respect Mrs. Coulson Kernahan differs from any authoress I have ever met: she refuses to take herself seriously in a literary sense. As a rule, I have found women who write are far more conscious of their own importance than men in the same profession.

"I am not," she declared, "a novelist in any literary sense of the word. I'm just a story-teller, to whom the reader at circulating libraries, as well as many critics and a number of the public, have been undeservedly kind." Yet when asked if Swinburne did not write of one of her novels, "I am reading it with much interest. It seems to me very powerful," she modestly replied:

"It was Mr. Swinburne who once said to my husband that 'great hearts generally go with great brains,' and the greater the author the more generous he or she is to the humble workers in the same craft."

After that sentiment I think all of us who are more or less writers must take our hats off to Mrs. Coulson Kernahan. I may mention to those not so lucky as I to know her as a friend that, should any of them visiting East Sussex come across a bright, vivacious dark lady on horseback cantering over the downs, there is the chance to take hats off to this unique lady authoress.

I recollect when visiting Leeds, during the meeting of the British Association, in the interests of the *Yorkshire Post* I had many calls at my hotel from a charming little lady with grey hair and an equally charming daughter in a grey suit. The young lady so persistent in calling with her mother was known to the world then as "A Girl in the Karpathians." She wished to be known as "The Girl at the British Association Meeting," and as I was hard at work sketching the members she ran me to earth, with the same audacity as she professed to have run the Huculs in their native mountains, and made me promise to be present at the Meeting at which she was to read her paper.

It was late in the day when that event took place. The various professors and others were faded and worn after days of science and evenings of feasting. The picnic element had scotched the scientific and the land of nod had been reached, when Miss Ménie Muriel Dowie walked on to the platform. The members of the press

Mrs. Oliphant

were busy elsewhere writing up the events of the day and despatching their copy. The members of the association were excursionizing or still busy discussing their tea. It was a bad time for the adventurous lass. She was but a girl in Morpheusian Mountains, addressing a platform of Rip Van Winkles—before they woke up. The effect of her large hat stuck on one side was lost, her waist-belt—resembling a horse's bridle—was unnoticed, her voice unheard, but when they did open their eyes they fixed them steadily upon the novel sight of a young lady theatrically dressed for the part. There were no press men present, so when I returned to the room allotted to reporters and description writers I told them all about the incident. Pens were immediately busy and the telegraph operators had to switch off to let the news through. Consequently the lady woke up the next morning famous. The lady's gratitude was demonstrated when next I met her, she pretended she did not know me, but then she had become Lady Norman and that makes a difference with some people.

I was interested in meeting Mrs. Oliphant more I think by being struck with her personal resemblance to my mother than by being in the presence of a prolific and popular authoress. Her likeness to my mother was extraordinary. Alike in face and figure, with that charm of manner, sedate and self-possessed, of the well-educated lady of the Victorian era. Both had the same eyes, the same sweet expression and the same strong mouth and fascinating smile, both were Scotch and both were sad.

I think Mrs. Oliphant was the saddest woman I ever met; it was towards the end of her long strenuous career, her health was breaking up, all her family had died prematurely. She had outlived them, and she had also outlived her professional popularity. Mrs. Oliphant was not only a sad woman, but had, I think, little or no sense of humour to relieve her view of life. She was essentially early-Victorian, and thought much of such men as Warren, Wilkie Collins and Trollope, but couldn't abide Dickens! Warren read her the manuscript of the novel which made his name, *Ten Thousand a Year*. She admitted, however, that his conceit was tremendous. No one reads Collins and Trollope nowadays and no one remembers even the name of Warren. Alas, I fear poor Mrs. Oliphant is also quite forgotten! But Dickens is selling to-day better than any author alive or dead. Twenty-five thousand *sets* of all his works I illustrated a few years ago have been sold, and there are many other editions flooding the market, eagerly bought and read.

I last saw Mrs. Oliphant at the house of her friend and autobiographer, Mrs. Henry Coghill. This charming lady was an old friend of mine, one of the many women who write—or wrote I ought to say, for she died a few years ago—and write well and yet are never heard of. She lived by her pen until one day at a country house, where she, my wife and I were guests, a stranger came to dinner. He was a very wealthy business man—a widower with a grown-up family. As the result of this meeting Miss Walker became Mrs. Coghill. Her husband, among other things, was the sleeping partner

in Brunner, Mond & Co. It was he who practically made the firm by finance and advice. I recollect that he told me that he admired the German chemist, Mond (who, by the way, was a neighbour of mine in London), but that Brunner (of German origin) was not worth thirty shillings a week! To hear these things is always food for reflection to men who, like myself, live on their wits, a life of strenuous work in which there are no partners either awake or "sleeping."

Mary Mapes Dodge I met when I first visited America, and I retain the happiest recollection of a delightful afternoon with her in her New York home. Although a writer in the Victorian era, and not an Englishwoman but an American, she was nearly as much read in England as in her own country. She was a brilliant worker; her editorship of *St. Nicholas* raised that periodical far above any other periodical for children published in any country. It was just as popular in England as in America, and the name of Mary Mapes Dodge was a household word over here.

She had a very fascinating personality—a strong face, masterful yet kindly; her charm and intelligence were reflected in the pages of the magazine she conducted. She took the keenest interest in everything English, and questioned me about celebrities I had met and worked for, Lewis Carroll in particular. She seemed highly amused with my description of the author of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and his almost childish egotism, and I remember putting forth my contention that he was not alone in this failing, and that, with the brilliant

exception of my hostess, all those who have been famous in imaginative work for children became children—spoilt children—themselves. Hans Andersen cried at table if he was not helped first, and was not given more jam on his bread than any one else. Lewis Carroll's childishness was of a different kind, his was pure literary egotism. It was his habit to watch the children of well-to-do people on the sands at Eastbourne—which he visited yearly—and then without disclosing his identity present those he most admired with a copy of "Alice." Subsequently he formally called on the parents. Then came the moment at which the Reverend C. L. Dodgson informed the grateful parent that he was "Lewis Carroll," the effect being magical and Carroll's delight immense. However, one day, the dignified lady whose little daughter had been the recipient of a beautifully bound copy of "Alice," by the strange uncanny clergyman, remarked! "Oh, you are the writer of those rubbishy books, are you? Well, perhaps you may like to know that I threw the book you gave my daughter away—I certainly could never dream of her poisoning her mind with such stuff as that!"

My hostess could hardly credit that there was anyone so stupid as that lady to be found in England. We then discussed the different traits of the English and American women, but finding the discussion on both sides artificial and perhaps insincere we switched off on to the subject of the young of both countries. She was particularly interested when I told her that my own daughter was my model for Lewis Carroll's Sylvie in *Sylvie and Bruno*, and

Mary Mapes Dodge

of the stories she wrote and illustrated to present to her parents at Christmas, and how she was one of the many young English girls who devoured the contents of *St. Nicholas* with avidity. Before I left she presented me with a copy of her last book, *Hans Brinker*, to give to my daughter in which she inscribed the following:

"A happy New Year to Dorothy Furniss. Across the sea, this copy of *Hans Brinker* is inscribed to her by—her stranger friend, Mary Mapes Dodge."

The lower-class readers, shopgirls, factory hands, servants, and other board-school young ladies, are frequently attracted by the highly coloured posters in the holidays, depicting some heart-rending scene in a new serial of a cheap periodical. "Well," they think, "if such a fine and magnificent picture as that is produced, surely the story it illustrates must be something extraordinary." The story, however, is possibly the conventional ordinary stuff made to order. But the facts of the case are these. The publisher of the novel, magazine, or popular newspaper appealing to this particular class of reader, buys up a job lot of posters. These they send to the authoress retained for the purpose of writing a story to fit the poster. She introduces the characters depicted and works "up" the scene illustrated. I met a lady who was successful at this particular job. A very bright, attractive woman, who was retained at a much higher salary than could be earned by many a real literary woman with a great reputation. I forget her name; I met her at the house of a well-known author, and I always referred to her as the "Poster Authoress."

I must say that I have never found clever authoresses differ from any other class of clever women I have met. There is no pose or "swank" or gush or self-esteem, so evident in the majority of actresses, or that shoppy talk of women artists. They are, perhaps, observing, mentally making notes, but so far as I can judge from my limited experience they are intelligent, without forcing the fact that they are exceptional. Therefore an artist like myself is at a loss to depict any one type that can be labelled "authoress," whereas the theatrical type is quite as easy to depict as the woman who paints pictures, or writes for the press.

I was very interested in meeting Miss Marie Corelli, for, as she declined to be photographed or sketched, I had no idea of the popular authoress' appearance. One afternoon in the House of Commons as I was "taking notes" of members in the inner lobby, my happy hunting-ground for catching caricature in those days, one of the members, William Woodall, invited me to join his party on the Terrace, and there I met Miss Marie Corelli for the first time. I found her, as I expected, very entertaining, bright, direct and full of common sense. She had just delivered her witty address entitled "Signs of the Times" at Glasgow; it was fully reported in the London papers, so that naturally the subject started our conversation. I had always appreciated Miss Corelli's pluck. The qualities she admired in the late Mr. Joseph Chamberlain in that address might well be applied to herself—she has the courage of her opinions. She was, I remember, on the occasion of my meeting her, very wroth with

the stupid " gridiron " in the House of Commons which then existed, a sort of cage dividing the ladies in the gallery from the House. I assured her that in my opinion the ladies did not want it removed.

" They don't want it removed," I argued, " for the simple reason that its removal would necessitate their ' dressing ' for the House. As it is at present they can go ' as they are.' But you would never find ladies agree to sit in walking attire when others looked more attractive in evening dress. That is the crux of the whole question. I am inclined to think," I added, " that even apart from this point the ' gridiron ' is essential. The ladies would be shocked, were they near enough, to hear all that goes on during a ' scene ' ; the Members for their part would hardly be edified to see the conduct of some of their lady friends in the gallery behind the ' gridiron.' It is not so very long since that one lady ' bonneted ' another, and a ' lady ' visitor astonished the others by coolly taking from her pocket a flask and rapidly consuming its contents."

The member for Stoke's women guests were not always confined to those whose cause he championed. I recollect a very pretty and fascinating American actress among them. She was seated next to me at dinner in the House of Commons, chatting about the American stage and the members of the profession I knew there, when a very severe specimen of the woman's political party broke in with :

" Our host informs me, Miss X., that you are a very good elocutionist ; I trust that you use your voice in the good cause in America."

She was a very loud-voiced, strong-minded woman, the wife of a wealthy Lancashire cotton spinner.

"I certainly do my best to entertain the public—I am an actress."

"An actress! Speaking the words of prejudiced men no doubt; that is, in my opinion a wasted—I might even say a dangerous occupation."

"Indeed!" ejaculated the fair American. "The words I speak are your Shakespeare's. I play Ophelia, Katharine, the Shrew, Desdemona, Titania and such-like."

"Shakespeare is going a long way back. He never would have made such fools of women, had he lived nowadays," remarked the lady of advanced opinions with emphasis. "Ophelia was a burlesque of womanhood and ended by being a drivelling idiot; Katharine is a libel on woman, and is horsewhipped by the man she married. Desdemona marries a black man who smothers her; and as for Titania, why she—poor silly fool—is enamoured of a man with an ass's head!"

"Quite true, she was supposed to be," naïvely retorted the actress, "but then the man with the ass's head was really in the weaving trade."

Whether this was an accidental remark or otherwise I cannot say, but it ended the conversation. Woodall was highly amused when I related it to him. I noticed that in his effusive farewell to his women guests that evening the actress was the only one he kissed. I believe this was the beginning of his loss of power with the women who ran the Women's Rights Movement.

His Women's Rights champion on this occasion may

have come across one of the very few good stories current of Macaulay. It is said that he met Mrs. Beecher Stowe at Sir Charles Trevelyan's and rallied her on her admiration of Shakespeare. "Which of his characters do you like best?" said he. "Desdemona," said the lady. "Ah, of course," was the reply, "for she was the only one who ran after a black man."

Many things have happened since. The character of all things is different, and nothing more so than parliamentary life. The House of Commons is no longer "the best Club in London," and one would be surprised to find as visitors, having tea on the Terrace, the celebrated women I was in the habit of meeting there in the "good old Victorian days"—not as visitors perhaps but, as followers of Lady Astor, Members themselves.

Yes, everything has changed of late, even the woman writer. She is to-day eminently practical, and there is little or no pose about her; how different from the days before photographically illustrated daily papers, and interviews and personal paragraphs and authoresses' published opinions.

In the Victorian days you may have seen her portrait in the Royal Academy. The great novelist, a young and beautiful girl, is depicted seated in an ideal sanctum, half study, half boudoir, gracefully reclining against salmon-pink cushions, gazing upwards as if for inspiration. Every line of her face and figure is classically beautiful and refined, and her expression is full of poetry. But the portrait is more of a fiction than she can herself create. In real life she is a commonplace, jolly little

woman, surrounded by a boisterous family of children, who climb upon her as she lolls with her feet up on a second chair, and her mind absorbed in flattering, personal pars. about herself in the last number of a weekly periodical.

Writing for one's living is a strenuous life. It takes more out of a woman than managing an hotel or running a scholastic establishment: there is not only the brain fag of the actual authorship, but there is the more important business side of the work. Some famous women, like George Eliot, are lucky in having a business partner, but most women who write have to divide their work between domestic duties and business worries and their profession, and one or the other is in consequence bound to suffer.

MRS. ROUSBY AS THE MISSING GAINSBOROUGH

CHAPTER III

SOME VICTORIAN ACTRESSES

IT was in that famous house, the old Theatre Royal, Dublin, I first saw a play-actor. I was fortunate in getting a good first impression. He happened to be Phelps. The house, I recollect, was rather empty; I thought this was because Phelps was not a good actor. When I went to the theatre again it was to see Mrs. Rousby—the house was full. I had also learned that Phelps was a fine actor, and I saw for myself Mrs. Rousby was a wretched actress. This was my awakening to the fact that artistic merit has occasionally nothing whatever to do with theatrical success. Mrs. Rousby was very beautiful—a Jersey lily who had recently been transplanted from that garden of fashionable beauties to the theatre of fashionable failures.

Thanks to Tom Taylor, who "discovered her," wrote for her, and boomed her, Mrs. Rousby was the rage of the hour. Her photograph was everywhere to be seen and, according to the shops, ladies of the period wore the Rousby hat, the Rousby cloak, the Rousby shoe, the Rousby goodness knows what, just as a decade later they wore similar things named after another Jersey lily—Mrs. Langtry.

But a few years later in London, Gainsborough's

famous picture of the Duchess of Devonshire disappeared from Agnew's Gallery, and, Mrs. Rousby anxious to figure as a lost Duchess, I was commissioned by the *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News* to perform that artistic transformation. She was then, poor woman, although still beautiful in a sense, spoilt by flattery and ruined by excitement. I found the Duchess, by appointment, in her dressing-room at the Standard Theatre. She was supposed to be playing in her discoverer's (Tom Taylor's) drama *'Twixt Axe and Crown*. She was in reality playing in comedy in her dressing-room 'Twixt the cup and the lip. I managed, however, to make sufficient notes of her face, and it duly appeared in my adaptation of the Gainsborough picture as the Duchess, a large double-page drawing. The beautiful Mrs. Rousby was very proud of her small ears and presented me with a model of one of them in wax. It was many years after her death I visited Jersey to give my "Humours of Parliament" and other humorous lectures, and met her husband, who was running the theatre there. He was a little old man, humorously egotistical, and assured me that he did not want to marry the beautiful young girl, and actually ran away from Jersey to avoid her, but that she was so infatuated with him she followed, and he could not escape. Even on the stage he always believed himself to be the attraction, not his beautiful, if less talented, wife.

In spite of everything, "the beautiful Mrs. Rousby" remained the beautiful Mrs. Rousby to the end in the eyes of the playgoing public, which thought a great deal

Lydia Thompson

more of her, thanks to her friends' booming in the press, and the shops exhibiting the photographs of her pretty face in every window, than they did of Madam Ristori, who was playing Lady Macbeth and who had to be satisfied with that cold compliment known as "an artistic success."

Miss Lydia Thompson, a sparkling and extremely clever actress in burlesque, and a very pretty woman with the best formed legs of any woman on the stage, was for many years one of London's great attractions. She made her professional *début* as a dancer at Her Majesty's Theatre in 1852, and she was at Daly's Theatre in 1895. Her great successes were in the seventies and eighties and her best remembered part Robinson Crusoe at the Charing Cross Theatre—afterwards Toole's Theatre and now part of Charing Cross Hospital. Lydia Thompson was not only very pretty and artistic but also very refined.

Miss Geneviève Ward was a woman of a very different type, she was an exceptionally strong character, a wonderful tragedian and a great power among theatrical people. She was born in New York in 1838 and spent her girlhood in France and Italy, attracting the attention of Rossini, who superintended her musical education. Miss Ward sang at La Scala, Milan, in "Lucrezia Borgia," and for a time in opera, but, returning to her native country to fulfil a musical engagement to sing, she had an attack of diphtheria and lost her voice. For some years she taught vocal music in New York, at the same time preparing herself for the stage as an actress. Her country people would not accept her as such, so she came to England

and made her first appearance as Lady Macbeth in 1873 with success, and she went from one triumph to another, but her Lady Macbeth stood her to the end.

She was a very familiar and striking figure in the part of London in which I lived. An admirable walker, she did her five miles a day regular as clock work, and might be seen with her small dog swinging along with easy gait at the age of seventy—a wonderful object lesson to the lounging and somewhat æsthetic type of her artistic neighbours. At her pretty house, close to a picturesquely situated church, one could meet the celebrities of the day. Her wonderful personality and vivid conversation attracted and piqued the curiosity of all professional classes. And to see her presiding at one of these gatherings, aided and abetted by her great friend Antoinette Sterling, was to receive a never forgotten impression. Both striking women, of splendid physique, both frankly outspoken in their opinions, and in Miss Ward's case often romantic in utterance. She was fond of describing part of her early life spent—if I remember correctly—on the pampas. She was evidently a superb rider, and it was her boast—with a twinkle in her eye—that she could ride a fiery mustang with a brimming cup held aloft in one hand, without spilling a drop of the liquid.

Of all the Victorian actresses Madame Vestris, the beautiful and accomplished wife of Charles Mathews, stood alone. No one attracted the playgoing public more than she. Though not personally old enough to number myself among her many admirers, I have

Miss Geneviève Ward
as Queen Margherita
Louis 12. III

known many a playgoer who saw her in *The Green Bushes* and other plays at the Adelphi and elsewhere.

Ada Cavendish was a great favourite on the London stage in the seventies. Her best Shakesperean rôles were Beatrice and Rosalind, but it was such parts as Mercy Merrick in *The New Magdalen*, and Miss Qwilt in *Armadale* that made her reputation. She died in 1895. She had left the stage on her marriage, but becoming a widow she returned to it five years before her death.

Of all women who relinquish their professional work to get married, and then return again, none do so with less success than actresses. It seems a fatal thing for an actress to endeavour to return to the stage. Miss Cavendish was a pitiful failure when she tried to regain her old position, and in later years that delightful actress, Miss Kate Terry (Mrs. Arthur Lewis), although taking older parts than those of her triumphant days, lost all the arts of acting when, after her long interval of domestic life, she returned to the stage.

Miss Cavendish married a very remarkable and popular man in London Bohemia—the well-known (and now utterly forgotten) author and dramatist, Frank Marshall. Frank Marshall, I recollect, with his large head, his curly dark hair and his huge pasty face, was invariably referred to as the "Boiled Ghost," which, by the way, he in no way resembled. I have never seen a ghost boiled or roasted, so I cannot say if ghosts swell in the process of boiling; anyway, Frank Marshall was very fat, and for a ghost, or for the matter of that for an ordinary man about Town, very elaborately dressed, not

to say over-dressed. He was also very rich, which made him *rara avis* in the Bohemian rookery. Sir Francis Burnand was very fond of telling us of a dinner Frank Marshall once gave at his house to the brilliant authors, actors, and critics he numbered amongst his friends, on which occasion his cook and waiters, in fact, all his domestics, became intoxicated and exasperated Frank Marshall beyond measure. He kicked the head waiter out of the house, after taking from him a goose he had stolen out of the kitchen. The guests had all assembled, Marshall thought, when a feeble ring came to the door. Marshall, under the impression the drunken servant had returned, rushed to the door holding the goose by its neck. He slowly opened the door—there was the man! Bang, bang, went the goose right at his face and shirt-front, but it happened to be Arthur Sketchley who had arrived, and being extremely fat and late was puffing and out of breath. He received the onslaught intended for the greasy drunken waiter. Burnand refers to this incident in his reminiscences, but he does not relate another touch of Bohemianism which he was fond of verbally describing. To pass the time waiting for dinner, the guests were entertained by Mrs. Frank Marshall giving her baby a bath in the drawing-room.

Ada Cavendish appeared at the Vaudeville Theatre in *The School for Scandal*, and was one of the best Lady Teazles I have seen, and I have seen many in my time. She was one of a splendid cast, which uniformly acted the great play for all it was worth, and it is worth much in the correct way. William Farren was, of course,

MADAME VESTRIS

perfect as Sir Peter, Henry Neville made a splendid Charles, and Frank Archer a correct Joseph. When I last saw the play it was Tree who played Sir Peter at His Majesty's, but neither he nor any of the principals had the ghost of an idea how to act it. The only one who did was Henry Neville, who played the Uncle in the proper spirit, in the grand conventional manner; the others played as if they were in a modern revue with hands in their pockets, and "Don't ye know, old chappie," "Right-O," modern conversational style. I fear we shall never see Sheridan acted again correctly. The modern actor and actress are as opposed to such plays as lounge basket-chairs are to real Chippendale, or white painted deal to the real Sheraton.

When Ada Cavendish played Lady Teazle, Henry Neville was the Charles. His costume was quite different from any I have seen in the part. It was worked all over, flowers or spots on a light ground. At the dress rehearsal he informed me, when some years afterwards I asked him about this costume, that Ada Cavendish remarked when she first beheld him dressed for the part: "I did not know you were to appear as a Harlequin, otherwise I should have procured a Columbine's dress and played the pantomime with you." "True," replied Neville, looking towards the Sir Peter and Joseph, "then with our wand we could have changed the flats" (the back-cloth in scenery). Neville was quite wrong in his double meaning, for Farren (then known still as "young Farren") was a wonderful replica of his father as Sir Peter, acknowledged to be the best the stage has ever

seen, and Archer was one of the soundest actors of the day. Apropos of Miss Cavendish's remark, I personally thought Cyril Maude, superb as he always is, made a great mistake in playing Sir Peter as a comedy part, almost clowning at times. His wife, Miss Emery, however, was an ideal Lady Teazle; she was then at her best at the Haymarket, and could have been quite as fascinating as a Columbine.

When I first became acquainted with theatrical London there were quite a number of charming actresses on the stage. I do not think they have ever been equalled in their special lines. Miss Marie Litton, after playing many parts in modern comedies, went into management at the Imperial attached to the Old Aquarium, and there produced some delightful plays: one reproduction that of *As You Like It*, with, I think, Sir Johnson Forbes Robertson as Orlando, and dear old Lal Brough as Touchstone. I recollect at the wings one night Brough stopped in his run of story-telling to introduce me to Rosalind. "Mr. Brough is a marvel, Mr. Furniss," she said; "I do not know where all his stories come from. The worst of it is the call-boy is always somewhere near to hear them and forgets to give us our call. He tells me they are facts, but I believe he invents half of them."

"Yes, Miss Litton," I replied, "although I am not superstitious, he is; and instead of Touchstone he ought to be touch wood."

Brough subsequently sent me his photograph as Touchstone, on which he wrote, "Like my Stories—it's a poor thing but my own."

ADA CAVENDISH

Pretty Miss Marie Litton was for many years a great London favourite. She began her career when quite a child and played in all kinds of productions, even melodramatic transpontine sensations, although they were antagonistic to her refined nature. In those days young actresses did not flop down into drawing-room comedies as they do now—they had to go through the mill. Thomas Catling remembers her appearing under J. A. Cave's management as a boy in a sensational play. She had to be lashed to a plank, which was then set in motion, and drawn towards a circular saw. Although she knew the scene was only an illusion, with no real danger, she said it always made her sick.

Then Miss Gerrard at the Adelphi was very delightful. On the stage she did not strike one as being particularly clever, but she always looked charming and acted safely, but once off the boards she showed exceptional humour. Her imitations of brother actors and actresses were immense. The charm of her graceful movements, so different from other actresses, attracted my artistic taste, and I was informed by Miss Harriet Coveney, a clever vivacious *comedienne*, the wife of Mr. Jecks, the manager of the theatre, that Miss Gerrard (pray, Mr. Printer, put this in very small type) *never wore stays!*

Miss Harriet Coveney was herself a very popular actress, in her time she played for upwards of fifty years many parts, and played them all with extraordinary vivacity and versatility. She was the original Jack Sheppard in that wonderful melodrama in the good old days, and when I met her she was playing to another

generation, Mrs. Sheppard in the Gaiety burlesque, *Little Jack Sheppard*, playing her own mother in fact.

Her celebrated daughter, Clara Jecks, the best boy in drama or comedy I have ever seen (quite equal to Nellie Farren whom at one time she understudied, and, like Nellie Farren, the idol of the pit and gallery), had also a wonderful career on the stage. Originally a musician, she was an accomplished dancer and a born actress. It was, I remember, said of her apropos of her performance as Selina Sparks: "This maid-of-all-work, who plays Chopin on the piano like a Paderewski, dances like a Taglioni and sings like a Schneider." She married and left the stage some years ago, but looks young enough to-day to start all over again.

When quite a child she has told me she played Fleance in *Macbeth* with "the greatest tragedian on earth," Barry Sullivan, varying it with the rôle of "Second apparition." Clara Jecks had, I must say, an exceptionally full voice for a child, and in the Cauldron scene she was instructed to speak as loud as she could. When she, as second apparition, came slowly up the burning cauldron and let her voice go, Barry Sullivan was so startled that he lost his balance and nearly fell on his back on the stage, and afterwards told her mother that her daughter ought to go in for tragedy.

Then with the merry family at the Strand, Edward Terry, Marius, Harry Cox and others, we had that pretty little blonde Angelina Claude, the stately and refined lady of fashion Nellie Bromley, that pleasant, handsome Elinor Duncan, a relation of Mrs. Swanborough who ran the

Miss Litton
as Rosalind

theatre. Miss Duncan was one of the really good sort, the supers at the theatre worshipped her, for if any of them were ill she visited them, and took them comforts of all kinds. If one desires to know who are the genuinely good people behind the scenes, one must inquire of the supers and the chorus girls.

Then there was poor Violet Cameron, who until she drank deeply of the bitter matrimonial cup was one of the bright particular stars in the theatrical heavens, and outshone all the attractive women on the burlesque stage in the late seventies and eighties. Forgotten by the present generation (she only died while I was writing these pages) her name brings to my mind that period in my life when she was the talk of the town. I only met Miss Nellie Farren once, and then she gave me a few minutes' sitting, between the acts, for some drawings for an illustrated paper. She was, like all actresses, impossible to draw. Actresses, no matter how experienced, seem to suffer from footlight fever, and are restless; the one thing an artist requires is a still pose, if only for a few minutes, but that seems impossible. With the exception of Miss Mary Anderson and Miss Irene Vanbrugh, I found that I was more successful sketching from the front, when the action of the play was on. The one thing in which clever Nellie Farren failed was the burlesquing of other performers. When Irving brought an action against the Gaiety Company, and Fred Leslie in particular, for burlesquing him, Miss Farren was asked by an interviewer what she had to say.

"Oh, I should have a jolly lot to say about it, but I

mustn't stop now as I am off to the matinée of *The Brigands*. But, bless you, I know Fred Leslie never intended to offend Mr. Irving."

"Have you ever burlesqued any one on the stage, Miss Farren?"

"No; at least, yes, once. I took off Kyrle Bellew in that burlesque of *Called Back* we played here. But I'm not good at that sort of thing, or else I'd do it jolly quick. I'm better myself, but I wish somebody would burlesque me, that I do. Why, caricature helps your popularity, and I'm sure it has done a lot for Mr. Irving's."

"Yes, I am surprised that he should have taken exception to it in this case. Why, Harry Furniss once told me that the politicians are only too glad to be caricatured, and disappointed when they are not."

"Yes," said Miss Farren, "or Mr. Gladstone would have had a jolly lot to complain about."

I recollect being behind the scenes the first night of Gilbert and Sullivan's *Patience* making sketches for the *Illustrated London News* of the various characters, when a very pretty young lady, looking charming as Lady Jane attired in white semi-classic garb, approached me while sketching, and reproached me for not paying her particular attention. She was a new-comer, the others were important members of the company, and I explained to her that her turn would come when the sketch I was then working upon was finished.

"I am here to tell you, Mr. Furniss, that I shall not be sketched. I have made up my mind not to seek

Harriet Cohen
Clara Tecks

notoriety of that kind, and for that reason I shall never, never be photographed."

That young lady, as matters turned out, was in time the most photographed of any member of the company; furthermore, she was more written about, and certainly for a time the most notorious. So much for her resolution. A few years later I was riding along the cliffs at Eastbourne, when I saw this charming young lady again, she was strolling with her fiancé, a curious-looking young man, Lord Garmoyle (known as "Gumboil"); farther on I met his mother, Lady Cairns, she was a sour-looking old lady seated on a donkey, attired much like Queen Victoria, with a mushroom hat tied on to her head, short black jacket and gown. She was using her umbrella to urge the donkey on—a boy was pulling the animal and a maid was pushing it—but it refused to carry her ladyship a step farther, its feet were in a huge puddle in the pathway, and after a minute or two of the trio's chastisement it lay down in the puddle! Though the old lady got out of the contretemps with ease, she lost her dignity. The young couple, strolling on the cliff, came a cropper, too, with their engagement, but the young lady emerged well, and with considerable dignity.

The Cairnses were of the prudish churchy order of orthodox beings—they looked upon actresses with horror, that their son and heir should marry any lady of the stage shocked them indescribably. So the engagement was broken off, and the young lady received ten thousand pounds damages for breach of promise.

Not long after Lord Garmoyle died. I had travelled

up to town from Bournemouth in the same carriage with him, and he was such an odd-looking fellow I sketched him. This sketch I sent to the *Daily Graphic* and it was published, causing a storm of indignation that a true portrait of a noble lord should be given with his obituary notice in place of a flattering untrue photograph.

Needless to say, the breach of promise and the huge compensation (it was, I think, settled out of Court) caused a sensation. Lord Cairns had been Lord Chancellor in the Conservative Governments, with Beaconsfield and Lord Derby, a splendid lawyer, a fine legal-looking man, but a crank. His wife was even more narrow and they had to pay for it.

Miss Fortescue was a refined member of the better middle-class, a relation of Sir John Tenniel of *Punch*, and socially superior to the pretty chorus girls, ex-servant girls, and others, who on the stage fascinate young fellows from college, many of whom become members of the nobility. Miss Fortescue had a successful career with her company in good old English comedies ; although her part in the matrimonial English comedies in real life was brief, one can but say it was successful. The marriage of chorus girls, girls who come out of shops and restaurants, or pastry-cooks perhaps out of the kitchen, or from art studios, where they have sat for the " altogether," and from thence on to the stage, and wear beautiful gowns or beautiful tights as the case may be, bring fresh life, no doubt, into the used-up noble scions of our ancient nobility. If they are clever enough to learn, and sensible enough to be quiet, and suit themselves to

Violet
Cameron

their new environment, making good wives, then all is well. But such marriages are risky.

Who said that for the first ten years a man's wife is his mistress, the second ten years she is his companion, and after that his nurse? Perhaps no one said it, however much truth there may be in it. The mistake a young fellow makes—to say nothing of the risk the young girl takes—is that the scion of the noble line only thinks of her as the first of the three.

An amusing incident occurred to me in the eighties whilst sketching that popular actress, Kate Vaughan, which testifies to her powers of attraction, if indeed any testimony was wanting, from a managerial point of view. I was sitting in the stalls at the Adelphi making a drawing of Kate Vaughan, who was dressed as a sailor and was executing a hornpipe. Happening to drop my pencil, before I could reach it, it was picked up and handed back to me with the utmost politeness by a fair-haired youth, unmistakably of the "Upper Ten," who was seated beside me. A little while afterwards my india-rubber shared the fate of the pencil. Once more the same kind service of recovery was performed for me by the guileless and gilded one at my side, with even greater and more studied courtesy. I was getting embarrassed, and having obtained all the material I wanted, was about to depart, when the real motive for all this considerate regard for my comfort was disclosed. It appeared that the young gentleman had taken a surreptitious peep at my sketch-book and, recognizing the portrait of one whom he had booked a stall for the run

of the piece to behold, had made up his mind to make a bid for the drawing; and he did so, offering me untold gold to let him take it away. That was before the days of snap-shots and of daily and Sunday papers devoted to photographs of stage favourites.

Poor Kate Vaughan! The most refined and the most artistic dancer (Genée not excepted) that ever appeared on the modern stage. What real artistic pleasure she gave to thousands of Gaiety Theatre-goers for years. A delicate creature, too. She died away in Africa—if not in absolute poverty, at least in unhappy circumstances —forgotten.

One of the prettiest American women who ever captured the hearts of London theatre-goers was the vivacious May Yohe, who was "discovered," it is said, in the singing saloons in the Bowery, New York. She first appeared in London in the early eighties, and became the rage of the hour. She fascinated young and old men by archness and cleverness, particularly in her singing of "Ma Honey" and other coon songs which became widely popular. In *Dandy Dick Whittington* she created a furore with her catchy rhythmical "The Postilion of Love":

> "Gaily I ride with spur and whip,
> For the kiss that rests on my lady's lip."

I have told the story of meeting her before, but I may recall the incident in describing one of the cleverest women I have met. It was at an "At Home" at Lionel Rothschild's at the time May Yohe was the talk of the

Miss Fortescue

town. It was a tremendous gathering of male celebrities and May Yohe was paid a big sum to entertain them; no one else was engaged, she alone being considered sufficient. And so she was, but, alas, she dressed in an ordinary evening gown, and merely sang her songs. What a disappointment! She was staid and correct, not the bright, vivacious, daring May Yohe, so, laughingly, she agreed to change her programme. She could not help laughing as our host—the little dandy millionaire—danced with her! a comical sight which brought down the house. As it was his own house it did not matter. Exhausted by her strenuous work, she declined any encores; the crowded room was not to be denied and over and over again appealed to her to continue. Her reply was this:

"Gentlemen, it is very late, and I guess if I am not home at my hotel pretty quick I shall lose my meal ticket."

"What on earth is that?" every one cried out.

"Guess you must ask Harry Furniss—he knows all about it."

For a long time after this I was chipped about May Yohe. Du Maurier at our *Punch* table never left me alone, and at the Garrick Club also I had to run a fire of satire by those who had been present at Rothschild's reception.

It was a fact that I had never met May Yohe before, but she evidently knew me by sight, and that I had been in America giving my humorous lectures. The "lecturers," she also knew, were treated in all the hotels in

the same way as theatrical performers. We were given special tickets which enabled us to obtain supper when we returned from our work late in the evening; these are, or were, in those days of American planned hotels, known as meal tickets. Her quickness was shown by so neatly turning the reply on to me, for I was one—and a small one too—in a very crowded gathering.

These brilliant theatrical women who create such enthusiasm are by no means ordinary—Mary Anderson, May Yohe, and many others, who, with their beautiful face and clever acting and singing, must be clever all round to win such triumphs. I saw May Yohe in after years as Lady Francis Hope, and when, later on, I was paying one of my professional visits to America, she had become Mrs. Strong. Her father-in-law was Mayor of New York, and I sketched him one evening at dinner. She returned to England in the early nineties, and, as many of her admirers thought, wasted her sweetness—on what they are pleased to consider—the desert air of the music-halls.

Apart from her charm as an actress and her delightful personality, Mary Anderson was a clever business woman and a wonderful worker. Members of her company have told me that in rehearsing a new piece she called rehearsals after the night's performance, and herself directed until the early hours of the morning. The capacity for taking pains was certainly in her case rewarded by hearing herself referred to as a "genius." I first met her when she came to London and opened at the Lyceum Theatre. I sketched her behind the scenes the first

Kate Vaughan

night, and that was the beginning of a very delightful acquaintance. She lived up Hampstead way, and as I took my constitutional on horseback in that direction almost daily I frequently met her. She was always gracious and pleasant except on Sundays, then she cut me dead. She wrote to me when this first happened, and explained that she thought it wicked to ride on the Sabbath, and therefore I was not to look her way when we met, any other day she would be glad if I did not pass her house without calling. No actress, with the exception of Ellen Terry, won the hearts of the public more successfully than Mary Anderson.

It is interesting to know that Mary Anderson's charm as an actress, combined with her beauty, inspired Mrs. Humphry Ward to write her first story. The beginning of a great career is everything, and it is just possible that had *Miss Bretherton* never been written we should not have had *Robert Elsmere*, although Mrs. Humphry Ward declares that Isobel Bretherton was in no sense a portrait of Miss Anderson.

" Miss Bretherton was suggested to me by the brilliant success of Miss Anderson in 1883 and by the controversy with regard to her acting—as distinct from her delightful beauty, and her attractive personality—which arose between the fastidious few and the enchanted many."

The fascinating Mrs. Brown Potter was another American actress I have had the pleasure of meeting, strange to say, for the first time away in Australia, where I was giving my " Humorous Lectures," and she was acting with Kyrle Bellew. We three, I recollect, cele-

brated Queen Victoria's Jubilee (1897) at Melbourne. It was one of the pleasantest little suppers I ever enjoyed. Mrs. Brown Potter is splendid company and as well acquainted with society, both American and English, as she is with the stage.

Fashionable London was once set laughing over a ludicrous mistake concerning the charming Mrs. Brown Potter. A letter was received by a certain well-known firm of Bond Street agents, from a foreign Princess, with a triple expansion polysyllabic name, stating that she was desirous of engaging the services of Mrs. Potter for a date in the month of July, and trusting that she would be disengaged at the time. The Princess was resident in Paris at the time, and the famous actress naturally thought it was rather a peculiar time of year for entertaining in the gay capital, but in spite of that she signified her willingness to cross the Channel and recite for the Princess. Shortly afterwards the Bond Street firm were aghast to find that, according to later advices, the transmission of the letter to Mrs. Brown Potter was entirely a mistake. The second letter, which was from an equerry of the foreign dignitary, ran : " It was addressed to a Mrs. Potter, a monthly nurse, whose professional services were required for the Princess at the date mentioned." No one laughed more heartily over the mistake than did the talented actress herself. I have no doubt that the charms of the lady in question are as fascinating as her services are valuable, but the general body of the public might possibly picture to itself a kind of Mrs. Gamp, and needless to say there is a wide gulf

Mary Anderson

fixed between the lineaments of the immortal Sairey and those of the clever and charming lady from across the herring-pond.

The public is really very ignorant about actors and actresses, and perhaps these " booming " theatrical clubs do something in making them known to those who really think there is something in the world to read about outside the theatre.

When Miss Vanbrugh was entertained by the O. P. Club she made a graceful speech in which she referred to an actress having to play many parts, and remarked that some of the most enjoyable parts artistically were not always the most pleasant to perform artistically. In this clever piece she has to assume a Cockney accent. Some ladies seated in the stalls observed, " Clever actress, Miss Vanbrugh, but I cannot understand Mr. Hare engaging a girl with such a dreadful Cockney accent ! " That is perfectly true—for it was I who overheard the conversation in the stalls, and repeated it to Miss Vanbrugh a few minutes afterwards. The ladies seated in front of me were Americans.

Miss R. was a very clever and popular actress, and in the eighties and nineties she appeared in most of the leading London playhouses. She was married to an actor who, though not " great," was what is theatrically known as " safe," which means useful without being brilliant—he had a charming personality and was devoted to his delightful wife. Whenever we met his conversation was always appreciative of her. " Have you seen her lately ? is she not splendid ? " or, " Oh, my wife is here,

you must come and talk to her." His first and last thoughts were of her. He seemed a level-headed sensible fellow, and I was shocked when I heard that his brain had given way and revolted from all mention of his wife's name, as is so often the case when men love their wives abnormally. She found relief from this terrible affliction by her acting. She went to America as Tree's leading lady, and I was on the stage behind the scenes the night Tree first appeared in New York in *Hamlet*. My friend's wife was playing Ophelia, and seeing me she went up to her dressing-room and brought me a letter she had that morning received from her husband, written in his asylum in England.

"I knew you would be asking me about him," she said, handing me the letter. "I fear he is no better."

She looked the picture of misery as the curtain went up on Ophelia's mad scene. I read the letter—it revealed a genuine madness and I watched the wife assuming a madness on the stage. I have seen many Ophelias in my day, but not one approached this lady—her acting was inspired and she brought down the house, the applause was immense.

"You are the finest Ophelia I have ever seen," I said to her, handing the letter back. "I never saw any one act the mad scene so well."

"I am glad to hear you say that," she said, trembling after her intense effort. "You know, it is a most curious thing, but I have never seen *Hamlet* acted in my life, and I therefore just acted the part as I felt it." She said this with a downward glance at the letter in her hand.

Mrs Brown Potter.

Lady Tree is one of the wittiest women I have ever met. She is W. S. Gilbert in petticoats. Tree was a master of epigram, laborious witticism which "smelt of midnight oil," but his wife's wit was more spontaneous.

Ellen Terry appealed to artists even as far back as the Victorian era more than any actress of our time; she was essentially an artist's actress; to begin with, her head was the type artists love to plan and paint. Her poses and gesture were studioish, not stagy. She always "made a picture," and now, writing of her in her later years, she is still a delight to artists. All those who saw her Ophelia, saw a more beautiful Ophelia than any artist has ever depicted upon canvas. Millais' Ophelia floating in the stream had a hard, unsympathetic face, Maclise's silly, stupid lay figure of an Ophelia, in his celebrated picture of the trial scene, is a still harder type. There is nothing hard in the face of Ellen Terry. The same may be said of her Juliet. There may have been better Juliets. Julia Neilson, the best of all, has never been approached, and she acted the part as no other actress has acted it before or since—and her brief career was fifty years ago—yet, great though she was in the part, she did not appeal to artists so strongly as Ellen Terry. Even at the present time, when she played the nurse in a recent revival of the play, she was artistic.

Her old women are as picturesque now as the heroines of her younger days.

The same may be said of Irving, he also appealed to artists. In every part he undertook, with the exception of Napoleon, he appeared to walk out of a picture. His poses, the movement of his hands, the manner in which he handled his robes in Richelieu and Becket, were studio poses, but they were not stagy. To an artist the Irving-Terry regime at the Lyceum was an education. Clothes may make the ordinary man or woman, but they certainly do not make an actor or an actress. Apropos of Irving's hands Miss Terry writes:

"As Charles I Sir Henry Irving was assisted by Nature, who had given him the most beautiful Stuart hands, but his clothes most actors would have consigned to the dust-bin! Before we had done with *Charles I*—we played it together for the last time in 1902—these clothes were really threadbare. Yet he looked in them every inch a king. Henry Irving's Shylock dress was designed by Sir John Gilbert. It was never replaced, and only once cleaned by Henry's dresser and valet, Walter Collinson."

I know this to be correct, for just before Irving's death I had his full wardrobe in my studio to put on my model when drawing Irving in his famous characters. His dresser Collinson arranged them for me, and apologized for their condition—"They would disgrace a rag shop, sir, but the guv'nor would never have them touched."

Apropos of Irving's costume, Ellen Terry says:

"Every one liked Henry's Iago; for the first time in

Lady Tree

his life he knew what it was to win unanimous praise. Othello was condemned almost as universally as his Iago was praised.

" On the last night, he rolled up the clothes that he had worn as the Moor one by one, carefully laying one garment on top of the other, and then, half humorously, and very deliberately, said, ' Never again ! ' Then he stretched himself with his arms above his head and gave a great sigh of relief."

More than once I have seen a statement made by younger writers than I, that Irving owed much of his success to Ellen Terry. This may be true to a certain extent, but it must not be forgotten that Irving worked his way into fame by the great successes of his Hamlet and Charles. He was then hampered by his leading lady, who was the daughter of the man who ran the Lyceum—Colonel Bateman by name. This was long before the fortunate days when Ellen Terry became his bright particular star, and how hard he worked is recorded by Miss Terry herself.

Miss Terry had one fault—perhaps I ought to call it a misfortune. She was always a " bad study," as actors call those who find a difficulty in learning their part. Irving was very loyal to her on all such occasions. I well remember the first night of *Robespierre*. When it came to the dramatic scene between himself and Miss Terry in Robespierre's room in the Rue St. Honoré, she unfortunately forgot her words entirely. Irving never flinched—he tried to prompt her—but her mind was a blank. With any other actress in the part this

contretemps might have wrecked the play. But most of those in the theatre were the friends of the performers, and the sympathy for Miss Terry was only exceeded by their sympathy for Irving.

It is said, I do not know with what truth, that in later times Miss Terry was obliged to have her words written large on various pieces of paper, pinned on to the curtains and backs of chairs not seen by the audience, by which she refreshed her memory as she gracefully moved about the stage. It is a strange fact that our best actors and actresses are frequently those who find the greatest difficulty in remembering their parts. Perhaps in the case of *Robespierre* the part did not sufficiently interest her; surely anything in Shakespeare, which does interest her, she would never forget. Beatrice in *Much Ado About Nothing*, she confesses, is her favourite part. Recently she gave a reading of it to the Shakespeare Society, and to a critic she said: "But, oh, don't you love Shakespeare well acted, well understood? He is a different Shakespeare to every age; somehow he is never disappointing. He appeals to every age in a new way, and always he says the right things. Do you remember when Beatrice says:

> There was a star danced, and under that was I born?"

Ellen Terry, in her life, is unstinted in her appreciation of "my soul's mate in acting," Sir Henry Irving; but she makes one complaint, that, although he did not care for his own part, Benedick, and only produced the play at the Lyceum to give her the chance of excelling in the part of Beatrice, he never played up to her interpreta-

ELLEN TERRY AND IRVING IN "KING ARTHUR"

tion of the part. Irving was certainly not at his best in it.

I suppose it was for the same reason—to give Ellen Terry an opportunity of appearing as Juliet—that Irving produced *Romeo and Juliet*. For surely Romeo was not a part he was suited for at any time of his career, particularly not at the time he essayed to play it. Miss Terry, of course, looked and played the part of Juliet to perfection, as Miss Terry rather than as Juliet. I recollect at the time I was visiting Haslemere and there met Lehmann, the artist, and his delightful daughters, at an afternoon in the charming grounds of Sir Robert and Lady Hunter's country house. Miss Liza Lehmann, subsequently famous as a singer and composer, gave an imitation of Miss Terry as Juliet in the balcony scene and I, hidden in a bush underneath, impersonated Irving. Miss Lehmann looked the part, but I wisely did not show myself.

It was at the same house at the same time I met one of the prettiest young women it has ever been my good fortune to come across. She was a Miss Pollock, daughter of the Indian soldier, Pollock. Lehmann, who was dining at the Hunters', one evening complained that he could not possibly manage to get a sitting from Lord Tennyson, who lived in the neighbourhood.

Knowing the Poet's partiality for pretty faces, I suggested that the artist should visit Lord Tennyson in company with Miss Pollock. Whilst she engaged Lord Tennyson in conversation Lehmann would have the opportunity of painting. This ruse was most successful.

Lehmann returned delighted, not so his charming companion. She was thoroughly disgusted.

"Poet!" she exclaimed. "He was no poet—but a disgusting old man." For what must this great man do whilst *tête-à-tête* with this pretty girl but discuss "her inside." He declared that she was full of germs. Full of germs, they were eating each other, they were devouring her inside—she was nothing but microbes!

It certainly takes a poet's mind to distort beauty into the semblance of a bacteriologist's nightmare.

Before giving an address on theatre-going to a theatrical audience—members of the Club—I wrote to Miss Terry for her opinion, and received the following characteristic reply:

"I so entirely believe in the verdict of the great public that I long to have the first night of a new play over and done with, for it is, to my mind, the second night which tells me of the future good or bad fortune of the play and of my efforts. On the first night there are one's friends, so many, so prejudiced—and one's enemies, not so many, but equally prejudiced. So, it seems to me, the first night scarcely counts. Then comes the second night, and all the nights. I cannot tell of how much it moves me, the enthusiasm, the attention, the encouragement! I just adore the public, and the public loves me back again. I know it, feel it, and am grateful for it. It refreshes my heart.

"Ellen Terry."

I must here record an instance of Miss Terry's extraordinary vivacity. It was in Glasgow. Sir Henry

Irving, Miss Terry and I, after supping with some friends, returned late one night, and found, as was usual in Scotch hotels during the winter season, a dance in full swing. The large hall was given up to the supper : the stairs and corridors to those dancers "sitting out," and the principal saloon on the ground floor to dancing. So it was with difficulty we picked our way through the merry throng, pausing on the first landing to look down on the pretty, animated scene. At that moment the band struck up a delightful valse.

"Oh," cried Miss Terry, "I would give worlds for a dance!"

"Give me your arm," I replied, and I chaperoned her on to the floor of dazzling delight and left her, as a raw Scotch youth, without a partner for the dance, entered the ball-room, and, before I had time to rejoin Sir Henry, Miss Terry was whirling round and round in the midst of the youth and beauty of Glasgow, not one of whom, not even her partner in the dance, had the faintest idea that a stranger had joined them.

Many years must elapse before we have anything in theatrical London so imposing as a first night of the Lyceum Theatre when Sir Henry Irving presided. Now he is gone the truth is plain to every one, then realized by a few, that the outlay of "booming" Sir Henry ate away all subsequent profits. Irving's success was a first night success, something big, something important, and an audience wholly representative. He was never a failure, the house was always filled through the prescribed run, the press announced record houses, the fiftieth night was heralded with a flourish, and the

hundredth night with a cannonade of eulogistic artillery. But powder of that kind can be bought too dearly, and, in the end, the Lyceum ammunition ran dry. Irving was an artist, a genius, above all, a Bohemian, he cared little for the day of reckoning so long as he pleased and impressed a first-night audience. There was always the anticipation of surprise, the genuine feeling that something out of the common would probably occur on these first nights. The audience was as important as the play, every one present was taking part in an epoch-making event in the history of the English stage. The difference between the players and the audience lay in the fact that the players were sincere and the audience was not. There was no more striking picture of insincerity than that afforded by the receptions preceding one of Irving's great productions. Three-fourths of his audience were his captious critics. "Macbeth!" pooh, Macfiddlesticks—"Pantomime"—"Couldn't hear a word he said"—"All mannerisms"—"Irving, perhaps, but not Shakespeare." To me: "There's a chance for you, my boy! Funniest performance in London!" To Irving! "Splendid! Finest thing you've done! Inspiration!" "An intellectual treat!" and so on.

After these insincere congratulations around the crowded stage, the fatuous friends made for the supper-tables and washed their lies down with Irving's champagne, and, when the smash came, the amount for these entertainments alone was something enormous.

No one had a greater regard for or greater appreciation of Sir Henry Irving than myself, both as a man, as

an actor and as an after-dinner speaker, but whether it was a purposely conceived effect or sheer nervousness I cannot say, his speeches before the curtain were deplorable. They were all out of the same mould, and were generally as follows:

"I have to thank you all, from the bottom of my heart—from the bottom of my heart—for—the very kind—very kind reception you have given our—my—our efforts to-night. On behalf of this company, including—including our—your dear friend, Miss Terry (prolonged cheering) we have, one and all, to thank you. Ladies and Gentlemen—in thanking you from the bottom of my heart—I must thank you for your kind attention—and forbearance, in—in the trial we have gone through in producing this elaborate production. We have done our best, and—we are pleased that—you have given us—evidence, the friendly kind evidence I always find—in this theatre—of—your renewed confidence—and thanking you from the bottom of my heart, on behalf of myself—Miss Terry (tremendous cheering)—and my company—I beg to remain—ever your humble, your devoted, and most obedient servant."

Irving was genuine—his appreciation of Ellen Terry was sincere. It did come from the bottom of his heart.

Miss Ellen Terry has a keen sense of humour and is guilty of punning. When John Oliver Hobbes, whose Christian name was Pearl, produced *The Flute of Pan*, Ellen Terry wrote to her: "What a beautiful story. It is full of *Pearls* too, and I should have thought it would *pan* out into a lovely little play." As the play in question

was a failure, and in consequence of the terrible and unseemly unfavourable reception which raised the ire of Pearl, who wrote a screed to the paper on the brutal and unmannerly booing of "the gallery" which failed to appreciate her superfine dialogue I wonder Miss Terry did not write that to produce it was merely to throw pearls before swine.

I have already published an incident which happened to me one Christmas Day in New York when dining with Sir John and Lady Hare. When the plum-pudding sent over from England was placed "all hot" on the festive board, it was discovered to our chagrin that it was musty and therefore uneatable. The cook at home had not taken the precaution to boil it before sending it on its long journey.

Strange to say, Ellen Terry tells of another contre-temps with a Christmas pudding sent from England to the actors travelling the States. Irving and his company were at Pittsburg in what must have been a very wretched hotel. It was Christmas day. The dinner was deplorable.

"It began with burned hare soup. 'Never mind,' I said, as the soup was followed by worse and worse. 'There's my pudding!' It came in blazing, and looked superb. Henry tasted a mouthful. 'Very odd!' he said, 'but I think it is camphor pudding.' He said it so politely, as if he might easily be mistaken. My maid in England had packed the pudding with my furs! It simply reeked with camphor."

CHAPTER IV

SOME WOMEN ARTISTS

WHEN I visited Fontainebleau with John Staats Forbes in the eighties I saw the famous animal painter, and perhaps the most distinguished of all woman artists—Mademoiselle Rosalie Bonheur, familiarly known as Rosa Bonheur. She lived in the Forest, and adjoining her studio in a large paddock she had a sort of menagerie—various animals for the purpose of study. At first I thought the figure walking about was that of an old French working man, attired in a blouse and wide trousers and without a hat, the head covered with white hair and the strong face reminding one of the Rev. Ward Beecher: this was my first and last sight of the great animal painter—one of the most wonderful women of my time—she must have been then about sixty-seven years of age.

As I looked at this extraordinary, unwomanish figure—I was some distance away outside the fence—I had half an idea of approaching her, but Forbes was very punctilious in matters of etiquette, and prevented me; besides, he was anxious to get on and visit the studio of Millet, whose genius he so worshipped. Bonheur was not to be mentioned in the same breath—hers was not of the same school of work. For that reason and also out of

pure cussedness I did talk a lot about her, of her devotion to her art and her early ambition of studying animal life, which was a difficult matter, as she had but little time away from her father's studio, situated in Paris. The boy Millet lived in the country we were then going through and painted the rustics at work in the fields of Fontainebleau. Rosa Bonheur, the girl, had to study such animals as she saw in the streets of the capital and, dressed as a man, she made studies in the dreadful *abattoirs* of Paris. Thus her partiality for man's attire. But these familiar facts did not interest my friend, so then we discussed her art. That topic was hardly more successful, until I ventured to question the naturalness of Bonheur's best known and generally accepted greatest picture—" The Horse Fair "—which, by the way, was exhibited in the French Exhibition of pictures in London when I was a year old. Forbes, however, was a young man and therefore remembered the tremendous furore that picture aroused, lauded and admired by all connoisseurs as the perfection of animal life in motion. Well, in that picture there is a horse in the foreground led by a man seated upon another animal. To me that horse is all wrong: it is beautifully modelled, but it is a horse dragging a heavy load—not an unharnessed horse walking naturally. No doubt Rosa Bonheur, to force the effect, and to develop the animal's muscles, had it attached to something heavy and so painted it.

The English Rosa Bonheur, Miss Kemp-Welch, has invented what she calls " Snapshots in oil." She scorns the camera. Miss M. Hepworth Dixon assures us the

MISS LUCY KEMP-WELCH

only photographs which are permissible to the artist are those focused and developed in his own brain, and then she says that it is Miss Welch's close observation of the action of the horse that has helped her to paint animals with ease—that settles the palette. The same biographer says of her:

"Her intense love of nature, in all its manifestations, and the ability to express that love, would seem to have been hers before she had time to be drilled into 'the Olympian bluff of Academies.'"

Mrs. Allingham is one of the most delightful women artists England has produced, she shines in England's particular glory, that Cinderella of the Arts—water-colour. As Miss Helen Paterson she had made quite a name for herself as a black-and-white artist illustrating Sir Thomas Hardy's *Far from the Madding Crowd*, and Mrs. Oliphant's *Innocence* in the *Graphic*, besides a great many other illustrations. Lady artists are generally weak in their drawings of men; sometimes this is due to their getting girl models to pose as men, but Miss Paterson's men always stood and walked in a masculine manner. Her heroines were charming, her technique powerful and the incidents she portrayed were well designed and cleverly carried out.

She devoted her talent to painting, and of later years she limits her subjects to English cottages and landscapes, at which she proves very successful.

I remember having lunch with her one day in one of those delightful cottages in Surrey. My children were young and so were hers, and therefore the party was a

merry one. Her husband was then alive. He was a poet, but never rose to the position his earlier work predicted. He was a contemporary of Tennyson, Swinburne and other famous poets, and it is said, when they were all young, they agreed that Allingham would, in time, prove to be the greatest of them all! However, he remained all his life a valuable friend of the Poet Laureate. Tennyson never published anything Allingham had not "edited." When my family and I had a cottage half-way between where Tennyson lived at Haslemere and the Allinghams at Witley, I frequently saw Allingham walking from one to the other. The Allinghams lived in an ideal rustic Surrey home. It was cosy and small, nestling in the hills—the very last place in which one would expect to find a White Elephant in captivity. The large garden all aglow with flowers delighted my children.

"It's somewhat untidy," remarked our hostess apologetically. "Our garden implements and flower-pots and things are all over the place. Unfortunately our outhouse is taken up altogether with our White Elephant, and my husband cannot, of course, part with it, and we cannot use it."

My children, overhearing this remark, were at first delighted, and then when assured that the elephant was not a real one—though still curious—were disappointed, for we lived in London close to the Zoo, and perhaps no children in London in those days were more frequent visitors than mine. Neither elephants nor snakes, nor any other prisoner in the Gardens, had any terror for

them. Now what was the White Elephant that wasn't an elephant in this beautiful Surrey garden? Allingham, as I have just stated, was the intimate friend and adviser of Tennyson, who lived hard by, and he had presented our host with this White Elephant. When the doors of the house were opened, to the astonishment of my children, they discovered the White Elephant was a huge, well-worn old-fashioned landau.

"We have no horses, but there it is—Tennyson's present to us, our White Elephant!"

Strange to say, Mrs. Allingham exhibited many interesting portraits of Thomas Carlyle which she had painted, but I do not recollect one of Tennyson. Shortly after our visit, at Mrs. Allingham's request, I collaborated with her in illustrating a volume of verse for children written by her husband. The following letter from this distinguished lady is technical, but I think interesting, showing the trials and disappointments we artists have to contend with in the reproduction of our work:

"P.S.—I hope you will not order a tint?

"*Sandhills*,
"*Witley, Godalming.*

"*March* 1, 1886.

"Dear Mr. Furniss,

"Will you allow me to send you a line to say how much pleased we are with the effect of your beautiful drawings as now reproduced.

"I was glad to hear they were to be done by process, as I have suffered agonies from wood engravers (even

from the best) all the years I drew on wood; and imagine that you must find, even with your perfect facsimile work, that your drawings lose much in going through another's hand.

"I was sorry to hear from Mr. Evans that you were not pleased, and while entirely agreeing with you that the work should be reproduced by the best method, I want these as nearly perfect as human means can make them. Your delicate cross-hatching seems to me given so perfectly and crisply, while the engraver will make the lines neat and clean. I only wish my contributions to the book had been clear enough for process, and feel duly ashamed of them in looking at yours.

"Will you pardon these remarks from a 'brother brush,' and believe me with kind regards to Mrs. Furniss and yourself,

"Sincerely yours,

"Helen Allingham."

Mrs. Allingham is characteristically Irish in placing her P.S. first!

Another lady artist I have met frequently was Lady Alma-Tadema, the second wife of that wonderful painter of the ancient world.

Lady Tadema was one of the daughters of Dr. Epps of cocoa fame—the other daughter I used to meet Haslemere-way was a Mrs. Pratt. She was a jovial, pleasant lady and very stout, one knew her carriage in the distance by the strain on the back springs. Lady Tadema was also a fine handsome woman but not stout.

Lady Alma-Tadema

So she was called "grateful" and her sister "comforting," a play upon their father's well-known cocoa advertisement—"Grateful and Comforting." And her charming little pictures of children in costume were both grateful and comforting too.

Mrs. Jopling Rowe is not only a clever artist, but she is also a fascinating conversationalist. I first made her acquaintance when visiting an exhibition of Venetian "notes"—smudges on brown paper—which were exhibited in Bond Street. I was trying the almost impossible—caricaturing caricatures—when a lady in company of Burne-Jones and some other artists burst into hysterical laughter. I flattered myself for the moment that I had dropped one of my own caricatures, but I observed that her attention was fixed upon the Whistlers in frames on the walls. Sir Francis Burnand, then editor of *Punch*, introduced us, and remarked that I was putting her in my sketches for *Punch* as "Mrs. Jopling Rowing on the Grand Canal."

"For goodness' sake, don't!" she cried. "I should sink on the spot at the sight of Whistler's black beetles," for I had turned his smudges of gondolas into beetles in my sketches. These "studies" in Venice, miserable little chalky smudges on brown paper, nothing of Venice —nothing of art in them. Burnand and I were very angry at having to waste our time in going to such a show of impertinences. Whistler had talent, but he was also an arrant impostor, a "master," if you like, of Humbug. No honest man can say that that particular exhibition was anything but an imposition. Any street

pavement artist would have been ashamed of the "pictures." Burnand did not mince matters: he let Jimmy Whistler have it:

"Mr. Whistler is the Artful Dodger of Venice. Turner made 'studies' from which he subsequently developed his pictures; but Mr. Whistler is the 'Chiel amang ye takin' notes'—in colour, and, unable to keep them to himself, he exhibits them in the most generous and self-effacing way to the public generally. It is very kind of him: perhaps it is very deep of him. Does he want to discourage his brother artists from going to Venice? He may have conceived a violent animosity to Mr. Cook, and has hit upon this method of deterring intending tourists from visiting the 'Pride of the Sea.'

"Whatever the motive for the exhibition, the artist seems to speak for himself, and say: 'Well, sir, I'm Master Jimmy Whistler, I am, and if I can do this sort o' thing with a shilling box o' paints from the Lowther Arcade, a few sheets of blotting-paper, and some brown-paper covers off the family jam-pots, I could do bigger work with improved materials, you bet!'

"This address evidently conveys the suggestion that he should be forthwith presented by his friends and admirers with a real colour-box, and the entire artistic paraphernalia. In furtherance of this design, we place before our readers our own 'Notes' in black-and-white, suggested by those of Master Whistler.

"N.B.—Visitors are requested to observe the principal

MRS. JOPLING ROWE

figures, on which we only allow ourselves to touch lightly, and compare them with those in the brown-paper catalogue. These notes being intended for practical guidance, every visitor should take them to the Gallery as a suggestive commentary which will be of the greatest assistance to him in appreciating the collection in detail."

But the Barnum of art was equal to the occasion —he framed in his gallery Burnand's notes and my caricature of Whistler's smudges and thought that clever! It was in this way, certainly, he got himself talked about.

These notes of Venice were, as I say, unworthy of a street pavement beggar, and I made a drawing of Whistler as a pavement artist and sent it to Burnand, who published it, with my other sketches, in the following number of *Punch*.

Edmund Evans, an engraver and printer in a court off Fleet Street, revolutionized the Victorian style of books for children in the late seventies and early eighties. Under his artistic direction and advice, Kate Greenaway and Randolph Caldecott delighted children, and "grown-ups" even more, with their charming series of coloured tinted books.

Evans built himself an ideal home at Whitley in Kent next to Birket Foster's. It was there I met Kate Greenaway. She was the daughter of "Father Christmas Greenaway." He was an engraver on wood for the *Illustrated London News* when I was an active member of the staff of that journal, in the days before photography

crushed out artists' work from our periodicals. Kate Greenaway had a tremendous vogue in those days, but she outlived it as the comfortable, unattractive maiden lady in a charming house at Frognal. A Society lady unconsciously libelled her one day in my hearing by saying: "Kate Greenaway is a most wonderful woman, I meet her children everywhere I go." Kate Greenaway's children meaning children attired in what was, and is still, called the Kate Greenaway costume, at that time seen not only in every Fancy Dress Ball, but in everyday life as well. When her art was on the wane she seriously thought of opening a place of business to provide these costumes.

An Academician I knew was perhaps the only man—or woman, for he was an old woman—who could not stand the "Greenaway gush," as he called her popularity. He was a portrait painter of smooth, conventional ideas, and stiff, wooden-like figure. "Kate Greenaway gets all her models in a toy-shop," he remarked to me. I made an enemy of him for life by my reply: "Well, that's better than painting portraits from the models at Madame Tussaud's."

When I came across Kate Greenaway at the house of her "discoverer" Evans, she was sitting on a garden seat under a tree on the lawn sketching some flowers. It was the first days of amateur photography, and I at that time generally had my camera with me, so I then and there took a photograph of Kate Greenaway. When I developed it I was puzzled by a round spot in the foreground of my picture. With the aid of a magnifying-

Kate Greenaway

glass I discovered this to be a drop of water hanging on a spider's web, which had been close to the lens when I took the cap off, and in which was reflected a replica of Kate Greenaway seated under the tree. I have used this incident as a plot for a sensational cinematograph play, showing my heroine reflected in a dewdrop—but not the famous Kate. Clever woman though she was, and capable of keeping up a long correspondence with her admirer, the fastidious John Ruskin, yet she was hardly an ideal heroine. A "homely woman," used in the American sense, sums her up.

I doubted if children really appreciated the charm of Kate Greenaway, her pretty little children, so good, so artistic, so demure, and I therefore followed Caldecott, Crane and Greenaway with a series of books in the same form as Caldecott's, for Edmund Evans, entitled *Romps*. Full of fun and mischief, these had a very large sale for some seasons. One day I was introduced to a very severe and orthodox lady who remarked to me:

"Oh, you are Harry Furniss. Well, I wish you had never been born! Those 'romps' of yours have quite demoralized my youngsters. Your own children are so well-behaved I am confident you have never let them see your books."

"Mine are model children," I replied with paternal pride, "simply because they are humanely brought up—they all sat for these Romps you object to, madam."

Alice Havers was another delightful artist in those days—a prodigious worker. Her children sat for her

too, but it was her grown-up subjects, in semi-classic costume, which are seen so often framed in hotel bedrooms, that made her popular (reproduced and framed in Germany).

She had strange ideas about models and would never engage a female model who had sat to a male artist, hence this sketch I made of her. She was a fascinating woman, very graceful and picturesque, but her life was a sad one, and she was an instance of how a woman could rise to the occasion, and solely by her talent and hard work "make good" quite as successfully as any man.

Mr. William J. Locke in his novel, *The Glory of Clementina Wing*, dealing with a lady artist—no, a *woman* artist every inch of her—is somewhat severe on the failure of women as artists:

"'Let me clear your mind of a lot of foolish nonsense you hear at your high-art tea-parties, where women drivel and talk of their mission in the world. A woman has only one mission: to marry and get babies. Keep that in front of you when you're taking up with any of 'em. Genius! I can't be a genius for the simple reason that I'm a woman. Did you ever hear of a man-mother? No, it's a contradiction in terms. So there can't be a woman-genius.'

"'But surely,' Tommy objected,—more out of politeness, perhaps, than conviction, for every male creature loves to be conscious of his sex's superiority,—'surely there was Rosa Bonheur—and—and in your line Madame Vigée Le Brun.'

MISS ALICE HAVERS AND HER MODEL

"'Very pretty,' said Clementina, 'but stick them beside Paul Potter and Gainsborough, and what do they look like? Could a woman have painted Paul Potter's bull?'"

Women I have met are, as students, quite as hard workers as men, but they, with few exceptions, lack sustaining power. Art is the most strenuous of all professions. It is no use playing with it. A woman must work, work, work at her art, babies or no babies.

The eloquence of the average amateur artist may be confused with the so-called professional artist. Often the woman who aspires to fame, when left to her own resources and withdrawn from the support of masters and fellow-students, is nothing more than a most indifferent exponent of art. So long as her teachers are at her elbow, she produces ambitious subjects, pictures in oil, combining a curious mixture of clever dexterous colour and brushwork with some correct drawing and feeble blotches of bad work. But once observe her enthroned in her own beautifully appointed studio, as a professional artist, only the blotches appear on the canvas. They, however, are placed in gorgeous frames and called futurist pictures, but even, as such, they fail to find wall space in exhibitions.

This typical woman in art must not be confused with the real woman of talent who works for her living, and makes a legitimate success, who suffers in public estimation by contrast with the amateur to whom I have just referred: particularly with those women who are titled

and are boomed by the snobbery of editors and the indiscriminative public of little, if any, knowledge of art.

James Payn was not only a delightful novelist but a brilliant humorist. He was a splendid companion and a great favourite among literary men at the Reform Club, where his terribly hearty laugh was so frequently heard: apropos of this some one made the remark:

"That man laughs like a cannibal."

"Yes, that may be," ejaculated Payn, "but, sir, I have never been able to swallow *you*."

Now I must have sometimes written something about women humorists in art—for the life of me I cannot recall what it was about or why I wrote it, but I came across the following written by James Payn in which he says interesting things about women as humorists. If I said there were no women capable of caricature I was probably right in my opinion thirty odd years ago, but I could not say so now, we have plenty of remarkably clever women caricaturists to-day. My own daughter, Dorothy Furniss, when she chooses, being among them:

"Under pretence of defending lady artists from the strictures of Mr. Ashby Sterry, Mr. Harry Furniss is himself rather hard upon them. He is quite right, of course, in their failure as caricaturists, but humour, as everybody knows, is the attribute in which women are weakest. Even in literature, female humorists are very rare. Critics are of opinion that Miss Austen is an example to the contrary: it may be so, but her satire

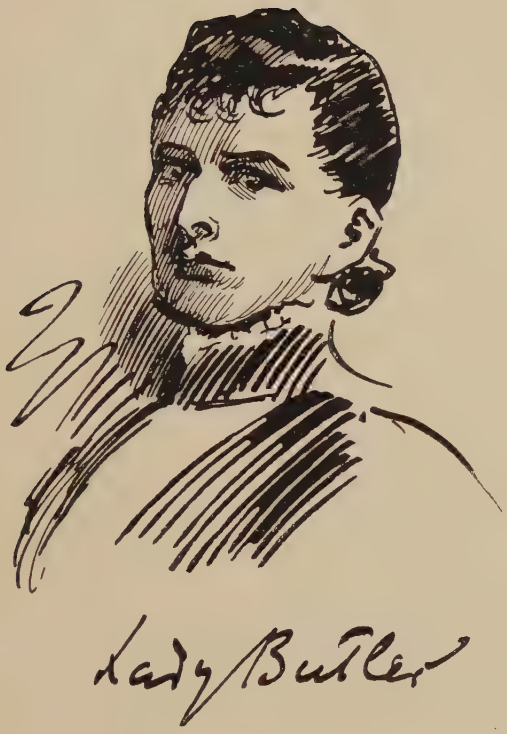
is certainly of a mild description. Very inferior, in my humble opinion, to that of the authoress of *Cranford*. The creator of Mrs. Poyser, indeed, is deservedly held in very high esteem in this respect; but outside that creation, her gambols are somewhat elephantine. She 'joked with difficulty,' of which fact her last book was, indeed, a most melancholy illustration. To a real humorist like Dickens, who threw out his fun, as it were, with both hands, in his exuberance of high spirits, there is no shadow of a parallel among female authors. It is not surprising, therefore, that lady artists should not have taken to this line of business.

"With one statement of Mr. Furniss one is obliged to agree. To his adversary's remark that 'women have greater delicacy of touch and facility of manipulation than men,' he replies aptly enough: 'If so, where are your women conjurers?' But the fact is that women are often praised for their peculiar possession of certain attributes which are not of much consequence, and which in truth they do not possess, with the covert object of depreciating their fine and deeper intelligence. For instance, we constantly hear 'tact' spoken of as an essentially feminine quality: to any observer of human nature nothing can seem falser. How often has one seen a domestic quarrel which might have been easily averted, not only precipitated but originated by the lady, through the total absence of this natural gift. Again, it is foolishly said that there is nothing like a woman for 'lifting the conversation.' Where company is so very dull as to require this hydrostatic assistance, it doesn't

much matter whether their conversation is 'lifted' or not; but is it likely in an intelligent company that a woman whose topics of talk are necessarily more limited than those of a man should excel him in this feat? What is more to the purpose is that in the highest walks of literature women have shown themselves capable of taking and keeping their places. It is only necessary to point to George Eliot in fiction, and to Mrs. Browning in poetry. What poetical male genius of the time has written anything beside which 'The Fourfold Aspect' (for example) has need to hide a diminished head?"

My first meeting with Lady Butler—then Miss Elizabeth Thompson—was just at the time she had become world-famous by her celebrated picture of "The Roll Call." It was at the first Balaclava Celebration Banquet, held at the Alexandra Palace in the year 1875, twenty years after the Crimean War. I attended as a member of the press to make sketches, and she, I presume, to make studies for another military picture. In one respect that initial banquet was too realistic—we all know by reading history of the disgraceful Commissariat fiasco at the Crimea. Well, it was just as bad at the Alexandra Palace. Neither Miss Thompson nor I could for love or money get any refreshment whatever, not even a seat, or I should say seats, to sit upon, for many weary hours, miles away from our homes. We were tired, hungry and thirsty—at least I was. The scene we wearily watched was not edifying and more suited for my pencil than her brush.

When Miss Thompson was made famous by the Prince



Lady Butler

of Wales, afterwards King Edward, singling out her picture on the walls at the Royal Academy Banquet for special mention, artists maintained that the Prince was under the impression the painter of "The Roll Call" was another Miss Thompson, the artist daughter of his old friend, Sir Henry Thompson, the celebrated surgeon, and that is why he selected it for special praise. This was an absurd *canard*, the picture was the thing, the whole thing, and nothing but the thing in the Prince's mind when he paid tribute to it. I think the reason the story got about lay in the fact that the painter had painted a "man's picture" with wonderful force and dramatic strength. At that time, in consequence of Miss Thompson's success, the agitation to elect women to the Academy was raised once more. But it had no effect on that conservative clique, which seems to forget that two women (Angelica Kauffmann and Mrs. Moser) were original Academicians. I suppose that now we have women elected as Members of Parliament, and recognized members of the legal profession, we may have in the near future a lady President of the Royal Academy. And why not a Poet Laureatess? By the way, among the brilliant women I have met the late Mrs. Meynell—sister of Lady Butler—would have filled that post to perfection.

Although painters may not agree with me, I hold that photography is an art, and a very difficult one too and depends upon the personality of the photographer quite as much perhaps as a picture on an artist's easel. It is an art in which women have excelled: Mrs. Cameron

in the old Victorian days; Alice Hughes and Madame Lallie Charles of a later period. Mrs. Cameron was famous, however, for her portraits of men. Madame Charles confined herself exclusively to women sitters, at least when I knew her, for the years when her studio was opposite to mine. In the nineties the majority of the Society beauties flocked to her studio, perhaps by way of an antidote to the too realistic portraits of that unflattering, but equally clever artist, Mr. Sargent, the ladies' portrait painter. A retired Army officer of the old-fashioned fire-eating Bombastes Furioso type, whose wife and daughters had been made things of beauty and joys for ever at the hands of the clever Madame Charles, said: "Ah, now that there is a photographer in London really capable of doing justice to me, I don't mind the trouble of having my own photograph taken." Straightway the grizzled warrior hied him to his dressing-room, where with the indispensable assistance of his valet, the butler, and two understrappers, he was eventually, after much struggling and a liberal use of expletives, invested with the full panoply of war, and in a painfully tight pair of Wellingtons, and a tunic the buttons of which said as plain as words, "Oh, that this too, too solid flesh would melt!" was duly escorted to his carriage and driven off in state, his features indicating that he was under the conviction that Solomon in all his glory was quite a novice in the art of bedecking himself compared with him. On arriving at Madame Charles's studio, yclept The Nook, at the north side of Regent's Park, he puffed and clanked his ostentatious way into the

operating room of the fair artist, and came to the salute. Madame calmly surveyed him from plume to spurs, and quietly remarked: "Pardon me, sir, but I never photograph gentlemen, I confine myself solely to ladies, children, flowers and pretty things!"

CHAPTER V

SOME WOMEN MODELS

AN artist writes: "The woman model is a peculiar creature! sometimes charming, generally irritating, but more amenable than her colleague of the other sex. She is invariably late. The work on hand may be a drawing that some unreasonable editor is waiting, and for an hour or more you have fumed and fretted yourself into a state of nervous excitement. You vow that when she arrives you will throw her downstairs or do something equally desperate. She bounces in at last, expresses her regrets, and in the same breath asks you what you think of her new hat; or, with a sudden twirl of her skirts, she will stand in a graceful pose before the mirror, and, a coquettish smile parting her lips, inquire if the colour of her costume suits her complexion, if you like the way her hair is done up, or if you consider the wearing of veils bad for the eyes. And what do you say? That you never saw her look smarter, nor with a dress that became her so well, and that she must be fatigued after so long a journey and would be better for a cup of tea. During the sitting she chatters. 'Have you been to the Academy? Did you like the girl in Brown's "Water Nymph"? Isn't Green a nice gentleman, and don't you think Mrs. White

charming and the children perfectly lovely?' Some models are intelligent and helpful. One young lady who used to sit for most of the leading artists was highly appreciated for those qualities. You told her the incident you wished to represent, and she invariably assumed an attitude in keeping with your ideas. A model who requires posing is a great worry to the artist. Strive as he may to place her in the position wanted, she remains stiff and ungraceful. Several models may sit for the same figure. One damsel will pose for the head, another for the arms, a third for the body. Trilby's foot was incomparably beautiful, but the feet of the female models of to-day are in almost every case crushed out of shape."

I have no idea who wrote the above dissertation on models, nor where he found ladies he so describes. I should think possibly in the pages of the novelette, for in all my long experience of all sorts of models, I never met one who arrived at a studio showily attired in a smart gown, who twirled her skirts, or posed with a "coquettish smile parting her lips," asking him if the colour of her costume suited her complexion, if he liked the way her hair was done up, or if he thought the wearing of veils bad for the eyes. I have a strong suspicion that the writer—who signed himself "An Artist"—was but an amateur and the model knew it; no professional artist would tolerate for half a minute such unprofessional behaviour on the part of the young lady. As a matter of fact, models are plainly—even dowdily—dressed, their manner is anything but coquettish: they are, as a rule, hard-working, serious, pro-

fessional women. The very antithesis to the fanciful model described above.

Models are little understood by the outside public. Some of the most refined, pure-minded and best of women I have met have been artists' models, but there are undoubtedly others.

Some years ago there came to London an eccentric country gentleman, an amateur artist, who rented a studio while in town and engaged models. He was a recluse, a sybarite, a mystery. He mixed not with the outer world, no one saw his work or heard his voice, or cared aught about him, except his models. To them he was always courteous, liberal and silent. They therefore knew little or nothing about him, had no cause to be anything but grateful for his courtesy and generosity. So it goes without saying that these young ladies invented his history, and of course maligned the eccentric gentleman. According to them he, every few months, either married or ran away with a married lady in Society. In time London knew him no more.

After years of experience one is to a certain extent able to separate the scandal from the truth in the chatter of this class of person, so I gathered that the mysterious artist was rich, and, if eccentric, very clever, and lived in a very remarkable romantic old place in the country away North. Tales of his domestic life concerned me not, but I was, I admit, deeply interested to see the quaint castle of this Bluebeard. So years afterwards, finding myself lecturing in a town not many miles from the spot, I journeyed out to see at least the outside of it.

BLUEBEARD'S WIFE

As I approached the lodge gate, a lady—certainly not the lodge-keeper's wife—opened it to call in a little Pomeranian who had come out to greet me with his snappy bark. I raised my hat and asked if this was . . . Hall?

"Yes, but it is strictly private, no strangers are admitted."

I apologized—I was an artist, and I knew how visitors annoyed me, "almost as much as models do," I added.

The lady, who was in the act of closing the gate, reopened it, and stood looking at me for a second or two with clear dark eyes, then her eyelids fell slowly, eyelids fringed with long dark lashes dropped like a stage curtain, and at the same time the corner of one side of her well-shaped mouth curled up. I knew those eyes and that mouth, but it could not bring anything to mind as to when or where I had seen the lady before.

"Then you have heard of the artist who lived here!"

"From his London models only, madam."

"Ah," she replied with a sigh. "Then I wonder you trouble to call. But," she quickly added, "I am glad you have, for you can now see there is no Bluebeard's chamber in this old house. You must," she smilingly remarked, as she pointed to the notice by the lodge gate, No Strangers Allowed, "be the inevitable exception to the proverbial rule."

I do not know if I was more surprised by the clever weird pictures the late artist had painted or by the romantic surroundings—or by the confidence the lady imparted

to me, a stranger within her gates. She told me of the artist's fanatical love for his work, and of his indifference to the outer world, of his health and their happy home, but I was rather taken aback when she shook hands at parting and said:

"Good-bye, Mr. Furniss!"

"Good-bye, your ladyship. I am much obliged to you for a most enjoyable hour or two, and for the insight you have given me into the life of such a clever man and unique personality as the baronet must have been."

During this picture-making boom of the seventies, many young artists, needless to say, started studios, and consequently those dependent upon art for a living, such as models, costume-sellers, and others connected with the profession, became very active. The black sheep of the flock not unnaturally grasped the opportunity to impose upon the callow youths in Bohemia.

Among them was a well-known female model who hit upon an ingenious method for obtaining a day's pay for an hour's sitting.

Models were so greatly in demand at that time that one could not pick and choose, and it so happened that it once fell to my lot to engage this particular lady. I had been previously warned of her little dodge, so I was quite prepared for her. She tried it upon me—with the result that she spoilt it. She sprang it upon me in the first hour.

"I am awfully sorry, sir," she said, "but I think I ought to tell you that my husband objects to my sitting to strange artists."

"Indeed!" I replied.

"Yes, sir, he is that jealous that he follows me everywhere. He is a french polisher and awful strong, sir, and he has smashed the face of more than one gent I have been a-sitting to just lately. He is mad, I think, and very desperate. He was pretty bad this morning when he read your note, and I'm afraid—well, I shouldn't like to see such a nice young gent as you have his beauty spoilt."

I stopped in my work and looked at a certain paper I had written and left upon my Chippendale writing-table.

"I am so glad he is coming this morning," I replied genially, "for he is just the very man I happen to want."

I took the paper and, going to the outside of my studio, pinned it on the door. The paper bore the following legend:

Wanted
a good french polisher—heavy work,
4*d.* per hour—apply within.

If the blackmailing french polisher ever happened to come along during these particular sittings, which I very much doubt, that notice had the effect of driving him away. I subsequently found that he lived by sitting—when sober, and was no more a french polisher than I was. For one day, when his wife was unable to come, he turned up to fill her place.

Du Maurier, in writing *Trilby*, aroused the curiosity

of the ordinary domesticated women, and the publication of that entertaining novel, dealing with Bohemian art life, was therefore eagerly devoured by the Puritanical provincials in America. It was largely due to the studio life depicted so charmingly by Du Maurier, and Trilby sitting for the "Altogether," and the fact that it was published in a high-class magazine emanating from a publishing firm, made the novel such a commercial success. Its dramatization only heightened its interest. After this there was a boom in studio life, and female models in particular. Society women became positively jealous of them. "What charm has the professional model that I do not possess?" has probably perplexed many an outsider, giving rise to curiosity or jealousy. "Bohemia must be open to us." At private dinners in Society more than once I have been questioned and cross-questioned upon this subject. What model sat for my Miss Parliamentina? Was she as dainty as I depicted her, had she such pretty ankles and feet and hands, and did she pose in the positions I drew her, or was I in possession of some model no one had seen but myself?

My questioner, on one occasion, not satisfied with my explanation, drove up to my house, Trilby mad, and implored me to draw her as my "bewitching Miss Parliamentina." This lady was neither "dainty" nor young. I invited her into my studio where my Trilby was sitting in a long black gown similar to that worn by the Speaker of the House of Commons and K.C.'s in which I always attired my Miss Parliamentina in

Punch. This was my usual model, "Nellie," whom I shall now describe.

For eight or nine years a very pretty model sat to me regularly two days a week. She figures in nearly all my illustrations in the eighties, and, as I have just said, as "Miss Parliamentina" in my *Punch* drawings: also as the heroine in the stories I illustrated for the novels and articles in the *Illustrated London News* and for various magazines. Of course black-and-white artists like myself only use models to assist the imagination, they are mere suggestions, not models in the sense that painters use them for exact representations of colour, form and portraiture. I know of one very popular and eccentric artist in my line of work who never—or hardly ever—looks at his model. He draws—as we all do—"out of his head," referring to life now and then, but he finds it sufficient to have a model "knocking around" in his studio most of the time he works away with his back to her. My model, as I have said before, came regularly to my studio two days a week whether I might be drawing Gladstone or other politicians. She was quite a child when she began sitting to me, with a beautiful face, fair short-cut curly hair, an exquisite neck and shoulders, and well-shaped arms. In all those years I believe she only sat to three artists, each appealing to widely different styles of work. She gave us each two days a week. One of the artists was Sir James Linton, President of the Institute of Water-Colours; a very painstaking and slow worker who painted costume pictures. The third was Albert Moore, the painter of

beautiful women in classic costume posed on delicately painted settees, often represented asleep and surrounded with flowers. We all know his beautiful work. Even those who did not see it in the Annual Exhibition of the Royal Academy are familiar with it in the reproductions. The classic women he painted—for it was always the same head—and it was always the portrait of my little model, Nellie. Nellie was an ideal model, she seldom spoke: she was not endowed with much brain, but had sufficient intelligence to understand the pose you required, and, what is more, the sense to keep it. She was an innocent, pure-minded, automatic sitter, and as I say a silent one, and, therefore ideal. She never even troubled to look at "what you've made of me," like other models, nor attempted to question you as some do. Apropos of the last-named trait, an artist I know had a "figure model"—I might say that Nellie was not a figure model, she only sat in costume or ordinary dress—who was new to studio work. In the first sitting the artist sketched in the girl's figure in charcoal; she looked at his effort for a minute and then said, "Ain't you going to pink it?" She was a novice. One who was not, however, sat to me one day, and pretended to be horrified that I had used her as a model for a drawing I was doing for *Punch* (I engaged other models on Nellie's off days), and drawing herself up said: "For *Punch*, is it? Well, I do hope you won't mention that I sat for it—you see I only sit to fashionable portrait painters for hands, and if it were known I sat to a comic artist I should lose my prestige." As a matter of fact

"AIN'T YER GOING' TO PINK IT?"

the model was, like many of them are, very anxious to impress the artist engaging them with their own value and importance. She was talking rot and I told her so.

I have seen it stated more than once by art critics that artists employ models to complete their portrait pictures, that the fashionable sitter only sits for her head and so on. A fallacy I disproved one year when three if not four portraits of a "fashionable beauty" then the rage were exhibited in London all painted by separate artists. Pretty as the beauty was, her hands I noticed were both large and ugly in shape, and every one of her portraits showed her hands. They were ugly hands—now no artist would dream of engaging a model for a fashionable portrait who had ugly hands, so that proved they were all painted from the original. With elaborate costumes no doubt portrait painters do get professional models to sit for the drapery, but, if they are conscientious, surely not for the hands—there is as much character in hands as in faces.

As I say, Nellie was a *rara avis* among models. She was quite happy all day reading cheap little magazines, "The Buttercup," "The Daisy" and such-like light current literature, which she produced out of her hand-bag, and so she continued until quite matured. Then she informed me with great volubility, and to my immense surprise, that she had taken singing and dancing lessons, and was going into "the profession." With all my powers I tried to dissuade her from running the risk. She was too pretty and too stupid, but some evil companions had told her of the great future she was bound

to make, and then one day she said that she had actually got an engagement. I went to the music-hall and saw Nellie's "turn." She looked charming and sang with confidence but with little voice some stupid doggerel:

> "I am an innocent child, a pretty little thing,
> With a pretty little finger for a real gold ring."

Alas, the real gold ring was soon on her pretty finger! She married a low comedian, one of the most popular and most highly remunerated music-hall stars of the time.

Not hearing of her for a long time, when I was riding one day up Haverstock Hill I turned down a side road and rang the bell of a villa where I was informed she and her husband lived. After waiting some time the door opened slowly and there stood a bent-up woman—evidently in pain—it was Nellie. She said she was suffering from acute rheumatism, and after my few words of condolence she closed the door gently and disappeared. To tell the truth her husband was a drunken brute who grossly ill-treated her. She died soon after. The man who married her paid the meritable penalty—to him a pleasant one—and died a dipsomaniac.

There was once an old woman who lived by supplying young models. I do not know where she got her stock of good, bad and indifferent "models." They seemed inexhaustible. One had only to write and tell the old lady what style of child was required and one was immediately presented. She remained all day in the studio and took her charge—in both senses of the word—away. She had never been a model herself. She

would never "bemean myself by sittin'." She had a wonderful face for a caricaturist, and yet under no circumstances would she allow me to sketch her.

I therefore asked her one day to sit close to the child so as to keep it quiet. She did so, but she talked hard all the time. I must confess that I encouraged her, for I employed my time drawing her, and not the child model.

After the usual complement of scandal about other artists, the inevitable topic of those women living among the studios, I switched her off into her own particular line of business—the children she supplied to artists and sculptors.

"Bless yer 'art, why it isn't when they are only chicks I looks arter 'em. I'm a mother to 'em always, and they don't forget their Granny as they call me neither, no, not even when they marry and become lydies. Why, you remember little Bessie Tufti. She as was always sick about eleven o'clock—but there, I could never keep her from eatin' cold plum-duff arter her breakfix. Well, she is a real married lydy now she is, and she hasn't known the smell of a kipper or a bloater or the sight of a 'addick for a year and a 'arf now. Then there's Rosie Nuggles. I used to always 'ave to carry 'er home I did—now Roosia carn't supply enough furs for 'er to wear, it carn't. She does the skippin' turn at the Gaiety Theatres an' the toffs are mad about Bessie. She's real good to me she is, an' promises me her next cast-off."

"A toff?" I asked.

"Na! Don't Granny know better—a 'toff!' Well, I likes that! I mean her fur coat. Just to keep Granny

warm if the moths don't get it fust. Then, little Bessie Billing, she sat 'ere once, you recklect 'er smile, with red hair and freckles. Oh, she was a trouble to me she was."

"I remember her, a little impudent pickle who always put her tongue out when I was drawing her face, and upset the ink over one of my elaborate *Punch* drawings," I replied.

"Thet's 'er, that's Bess! wot a memory you *'ave* got, sir."

"Yes, when two days' work is ruined in two seconds I remember it," I remarked bitterly. "What has become of this little minx?"

"Oh, she jined the Salvation Army, she did. She didn't give 'erself a chance, she didn't. Why, she 'ud made a fortun' on the stage."

"Or off it," I replied. "She is better where she is."

"Wot, in a poke bonnet, beatin' a tammyrene! I call it a wasted life I do."

"And the twins," I asked, "the two little mites you brought round when I only wanted to draw one, and made me pay for both?"

"You mean the Ricketts, sir? Ah, I never 'ear no more of 'em. They were always fightin', they were. Oh, yes, I 'ave 'eard—they are on the 'alls, known as' 'The Loving Sisters'—one of them tried to kill the other; you read about it, sir, strangle 'er when sleepin', poor thing, and got six months, and the other got a year for pinching at 'arrods'. Now the mother of this darling as you're now a drawn of——"

But having finished my sketch of the garrulous old woman I paid her for " darling's " presence and so got rid of both.

Women who sit as models have a much easier time of it in private studios than at art schools; they have only one man to please and one, moreover, who understands his work. In the latter they have several who do not, and are up to every sort of mischief, and pranks common to all students. The following incident will show that when the cat's away, the mice will play, " The Cat " being the obvious nickname bestowed by the students of an art school upon their master, Catterson-Lyne, the proprietor of Lyne Academy of Art. If he were present they were as quiet as mice; when he was not looking they played generally in the adjacent mews, a *cul-de-sac* that was situated behind the school.

Here at times people hurried past—possibly with the vague notion that the place was part of an asylum for lunatics. The children of the neighbourhood knew better, and stood in knots watching the antics of the students; one or two ventured farther than the others, and were seized, placed high up on a wooden stool or made to shake hands with the suspended skeleton by the door in the basement studio.

One day, at lunch-time, a larger crowd than usual stood at the entrance of the yard, the male students seemed to be up to some particularly wild folly. The yard was in the pavier's hands, it was " up." The slabs ready to be laid in the yard were heaped against the wall of the school. The workmen left for dinner,

and the students abandoned their own lunch rather than miss a grand opportunity for practical fun.

"Carrots," a big, strong student from the country, with landscapes ornamenting his working coat, was conspicuously busy moving the slabs of stone or concrete.

"Hippy," the fattest student, had a skeleton painted in white down the back of his long black alpaca coat; and a modelling student had nine black beetles and other insects painted on his white overall. Their gruesome joke was to turn the yard into a burial-ground, and they vied with each other writing epitaphs on the rough stone. "Sacred to the Memory of a Cat, who dressed himself in a Lion's skin, and now lies here in his own mews." "Sacred to the Memory of the Missing Arm of the Venus of Milo, with the humble thanks of all students that it never was found." "The dearly beloved wife of Jim Jones and his eighteen children, who died from the effect of seeing his first picture." "Erected of the body colour of Shanks R., prospective P.R.A. Pra for his sole contribute to Bust Art"; and other foolish attempts at wit, but the one that seemed to attract most students was carefully written as follows:

In Memory of
RUTH
A model maiden,
who departed this life school
for a long rest
at one p.m.
Beloved by all.
Requiescat in pace.

"Bravo, Cadmium!" cried the students as a sickly, yellow-complexioned youth with brushes and paint completed the flourish under the Latin quotation.

"Now for the Urn and the weeping Angel. Good! Here they come. Bravo, bravo, Ruth!" all shouted as "Carrots," the ringleader of the mischief, produced an urn from the still life room, and "Bristles," another pupil, led out a pretty girl draped in white and, in spite of her protests, posed her against the mock tombstone in the familiar attitude seen in monumental masonry representing the weeping angel. "Good little Ruth, you *are* splendid!" they all shouted, clapping their hands and dancing round her; the poor girl was actually in tears.

Among the groups of lookers-on attracted by the noise was a refined young fellow who seemed annoyed at the scene, and as soon as the girl was posed, quickly pushing past the students, he touched her on the shoulder and said:

"Ruth, what's all this? Why do you let these fellows annoy you?"

"Oh, Mr. Forsyth, it is only their fun, students will be students, you know."

"Yes, no one knows that better than I do," said the new-comer, facing the men. "I have been a student at Munich, Paris and Antwerp, but, wild as we students were, we never robbed a model of her brief rest, or mocked at death. Ruth, run in, or you will catch cold in that costume. I was on my way round to ask you if you had any vacant days next month."

"I can sit for you to-morrow, for I'll not come here again," said the girl firmly, as her eye caught the inscription on the burlesque tomb.

The students apologized. They had acted on impulse, the sight of the nice new slabs was too much for their artistic eye, and the temptation to turn the upturned paving-stones into tombstones was adopted without thought. The weeping angel was a climax which they now, one and all, genuinely regretted. Ruth was their favourite as well as their prettiest model, and they would make amends.

"No lunch for a week, my boys, and a new hat, with the biggest feather, for Ruth on Saturday."

Ruth duly received the hat, and wore it soon afterwards when she became Mrs. Forsyth.

Some artists marrying women who have been models naturally pose them for their pictures; and some wives who have not been models sit, at least, for the heads. Lady Alma-Tadema's portrait crops up in many of her husband's pictures; and there are several others.

A well-known Royal Academician painted a full figure of the nude—his wife sat for the head; at the Exhibition Sir Francis Burnand and I came across the lady, and Burnand, who knew her well, remarked: "Capital portrait of you, madam, capital. I did not recognize it as such at first, as I had never seen you thus unarrayed before."

Other women have been drawn and painted who are not models. A celebrated beauty, a Duchess, sat for Titania in Landseer's well-known picture of "The

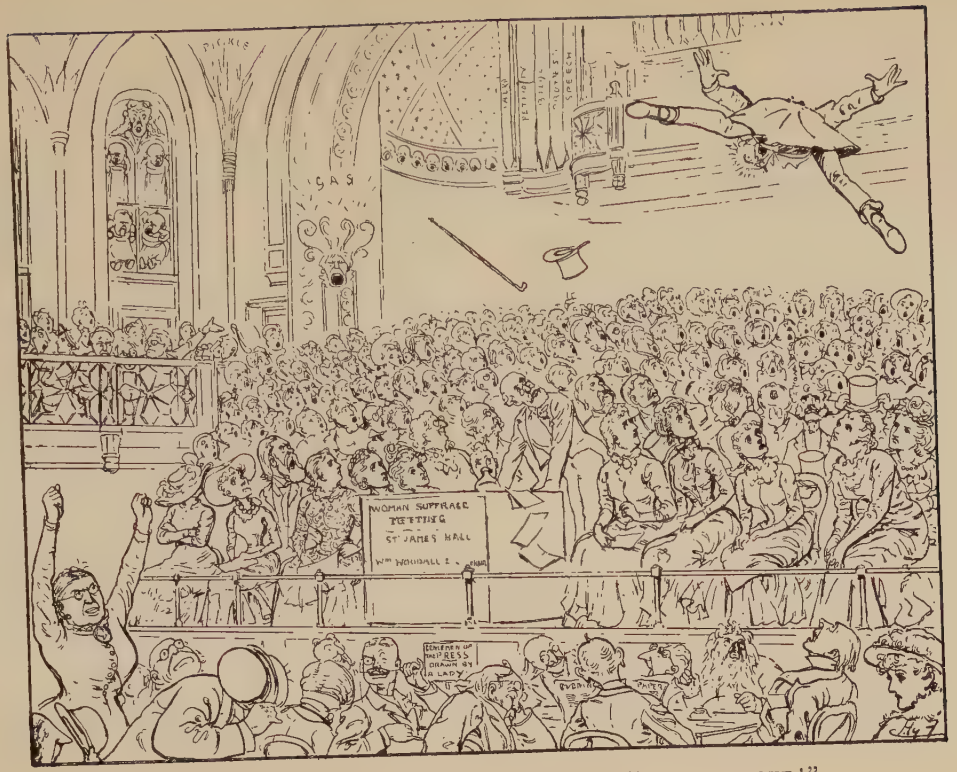
Maud Branscombe.

Midsummer Night's Dream." Years ago a very pretty girl—I think she was on the stage, but of that I am not sure—Miss Maud Branscombe, who had a sweet, girlish little face and a profusion of golden hair, was more drawn by artists and more photographed than any woman of that period. The professional model is quite a different woman from those one frequently sees depicted in picture shows. Artists often prevail upon their daughters to sit as their models; brought up in the environment of studio life it is only natural they should be excellent sitters. Firth's "Dolly Varden" was a portrait of his own daughter. I have had the advantage of my own daughter to sit for Sylvie in Lewis Carroll's *Sylvie and Bruno*, and later on she sat to me frequently—until she became herself an artist and was, therefore, too busy.

CHAPTER VI

SOME WOMEN WORKERS

FORTUNATELY I am dealing in this volume with women I met before the War, and some a long time before. Obviously it would not be wise of me to write of those I have met in recent years. Were I to write of women I have met since the War broke out I should require not a brief chapter but a full-sized volume to deal with Women Workers alone. For women of all classes have come forward of late and astonished the world by their work. They have at last come into their own, a world monopolized by men hitherto, and have completely revolutionized the old state of affairs. One could hardly credit the difficulties of the task of the women workers who were the pioneers of this belated emancipation. I recollect the rise of the so-called Women's Rights Movement, and the numerous brilliant women who were connected with it. They had many champions in the Houses of Parliament, from John Stuart Mill to the genial William Woodall. The latter was a great personal friend of mine, and in consequence I often met the women whose cause he championed. A drawing of mine on the opposite page shows him presiding at a great meeting held at St. James's



WOMEN SUFFRAGE MEETING, ST. JAME'S HALL. "TURN HIM OUT!"

Mostly appeared in "Punch"

Hall in which I depicted the portraits of the leading women in that movement. They are seen gazing at the figure of a man who is in the act of being chucked out. Strange to say, when the drawing appeared in *Punch* that figure was literally chucked out, otherwise cut out altogether. I never could understand the reason of this summary treatment, but so it appeared in the comic journal, with absolutely no meaning—the ladies are looking at nothing! Perhaps that was the editor's hidden satire—so hidden I for one could not divine it.

Those women were all workers, not wreckers as were the later day suffragettes. They included women of brilliant education and high social position. Nor were they rowdies. They were simply quietly persuasive. How could the lady whom I have drawn, speaking of that very meeting, be otherwise than what I have described? She was a lady of title. Strange to say, so is the first woman to take her seat in the House of Commons. Mrs. Fawcett should have been there years ago. She has always been a great worker and a great speaker. I have never heard Mrs. Fawcett speak, but I gather from a reference to her in Mrs. Humphry Ward's book of reminiscences she is equally attractive both as a speaker and a conversationalist.

"I see her so clearly as a fresh picturesque figure—in green silk dress and a necklace of amber beads, when she came down to Oxford in the mid-seventies to give a course of lectures in the series that Mrs. Creighton and I were organizing, and I remember well the atmosphere of sympathy and admiration which surrounded

her, as she spoke to an audience in which many of us were well acquainted with the heroic story of Mr. Fawcett's blindness, and of the part played by his wife in enabling him to continue his economic and Parliamentary work."

I know her to be a very brilliant conversationalist and extremely witty. She went to Africa during the Boer War, and among her other duties she looked after the native women in the hospitals. On one occasion she applied bran poultices to certain patients and made them comfortable for the night. In the morning she could find no trace of the poultices. The patients had eaten them!

Not only did she prove invaluable in assisting her afflicted husband with his work all through his public life, but she so endowed her daughter with knowledge in training her to take her place in the university, she came out on top and beat all the University men of her time. I remember meeting this brilliant daughter at a country house and the walks we had together, and how, one day she, being quite a young girl, made a rush at a five-barred gate and cleared it in great style. This, it appeared, was merely typical of her intellectual performances shortly afterwards.

Mrs. Fawcett and I do not agree in politics and other things, one of these being her objection to children performing in theatres. After a cartoon of mine on the subject which appeared in *Punch*, I received the following letter from her, which is typical of her clear-headedness:

MRS. FAWCETT

"*February 22nd*, 1889,
"*2 Gower Street.*

"DEAR MR. FURNISS,

"I duly noted your amusing picture in *Punch* on the subject of the employment of children in theatres and the lifelike portrait of myself at the bottom of the picture. So in revenge I am going to ask you to give half an hour to the consideration of the other side of the question, by reading the enclosed. What you have represented are children saving their sick parents from starvation by their wages earned in the theatres: what you ought to have represented (in hundreds of cases) are children providing their idle and drunken parents with money to spend in the public-house. You know I have no prejudice against theatres as such, but I have the very strongest feeling against children being sent to work and to earn wages for the family during their early infancy. It is the most hideous waste in every respect to allow it—and I do not see why theatres should be treated differently in this respect from all the other regular industries of the country.

"With best regards to Mrs. Furniss and yourself, in which my sister joins,

"Believe me,
"Yours very truly,
"M. G. FAWCETT."

I have also met Mrs. Henry Fawcett's sisters. Her elder sister, Mrs. Garrett Anderson, the pioneer of women practising medicine, the first woman to be elected Mayor

of an English town, and a member of the first London School Board, was one of the most brilliant women of our time. Miss Garrett, the younger sister, I have also met, an architect of marked ability who, although living in that dull grey Gower Street, has made many homes beautiful. Truly a remarkable trio of women.

When visiting a large manufacturing city in the centre of England to lecture, I was the guest of the Mayor of the place, a naturalized German, head of a large manufactory. He entertained me officially at a dinner in my honour, and after my lecture drove me home to his house in the suburbs. The door was opened by a woman in an apron with her sleeves tucked up. She followed the Mayor, his daughter and myself into the sitting-room, provided glasses and decanters, and to my surprise sat down.

"Thought you had gone to the Club—I am off to bed," she said in a frigid tone, and forthwith departed.

In the morning she came into my bedroom and informed me that the bathroom was ready. She pulled up the blinds and placed hot water on the washstand and sat down on a chair, with her arms on her hips.

"The Mayor has gone to business—he always starts early," she said, "but his daughter will be at breakfast."

"Charming young lady," I remarked.

"Glad you think so," she replied, "for she is my daughter."

"Really!" I remarked.

"Yes. You don't know who I am. I am the Lady

Mayoress—funny, isn't it? I never go out to these functions, my daughter takes my place. You see," she went on, "I was one of the girls in the factory; now my husband is the head of it and Lord Mayor, but I am just the same. They want to photograph me, me! Sal as I was known by in the factory. Why, not much! No, I don't want to appear in public and receive people or see my photograph in windows as the Lady Mayoress for all the girls to look at, and perhaps laugh at me. No, I am just what I am."

I thought her the most sensible woman I had ever met. Before I left the house she and I had a long chat, and I found her exceptionally intelligent and endowed with practical common sense and quite charming. She was unique.

Many years ago at the house of a very prosperous business friend of mine who lived luxuriously in Fitzjohn's Avenue, Hampstead, I took in to dinner a charming lady, the second wife of a big shipping magnate who was present and talked loudly and vulgarly of dinners in general and of his own in particular—in fact he seemed to be one of those men who lived solely for sampling the good things of this life; in contrast to his attractive wife, who was, it struck me, perhaps by contrast, as particularly refined. The following day at lunch I informed my host of the previous evening that I was charmed by the lady wife of his shipping vulgarian friend. He then told me the true story of the lady in question, which I append in letter form on the following pages.

"*Midas Club, Piccadilly.*

"DEAR PATER,

"Your dinner last night was atrocious, and you have been swindled again over those beastly cigars. The wine, of course, was excellent. For God's sake give your dinners at the Café Royal or at Verrey's and don't attempt another at your house.

"Our New York friend, Ebenezer Rockschaller, went away disgusted, and I know we won't ship much of his foods till he forgets your dinner. Sir Thomas Tinfoil wouldn't get into the same carriage with me this morning; and Sir Simple Gull went straight to the Carlton last night. I heard him tell her ladyship as he left, 'to get somethink to *h*eat,' so you won't get him to work that baronetcy for you. *Verb. sap.*

"Your affectionate son,

"RICHARD."

"*Orebay House,*
"*North Gate, Regent's Park.*

"DEAR DICK,

"You are right. I am laid up myself to-day, and, as usual, I have given the cook notice. Since your poor mother died the dinners have been getting worse and worse, and the table arranged less and less effectively. I *must* have my dinners at home. The portrait of your uncle, the Dean, is worth a lot to me and goes down with the snobs; and the Wyllie painting of the launch, and that big photo of the Prince of Wales inspecting our s.s. *California* on the Mersey, is all I have to talk about

to my guests. I have them in the dining-room on purpose. At Verrey's the dinner would be all right, no doubt, but for business it would be all wrong. Why don't you find me a cook?"

"*Midas, Piccadilly.*

"DEAR PATER,

"At a committee meeting of our Club this afternoon—strange to say—we had to discuss getting a new *chef*. Colonel Fitz-Bisley suggested our engaging some wonderful female *chef* he has heard about, as clever as any Frenchman, but the committee laughed the notion of a woman cook to scorn, as if the Garrick Club hadn't had one for years. However, I said nothing, as I was anxious you should give her a trial. Colonel Fitz says you engage her for the dinner only—not necessarily permanently; she has clients all over London. Five guineas is her fee. She orders the dinner, goes to the house for the day and sees it through. I enclose her address."

"*Orebay House,*
"*North Gate, Regent's Park.*

"DEAR DICK,

"Thanks; I engaged her for last Thursday's dinner—I wish you could have been here. It was the best dinner I ever sat down to. But this morning Cook has given *me* notice. She says the *chef* is a beast and an ugly old thief. Is she? I must see her next time, for I have written to engage her for the next two dinners."

"Midas Club, Piccadilly.

"DEAR GUV,

"Delighted Fitz's professional lady cook is a success. He tells me she is one of the prettiest women of the day—a lady of very good family, and famous in Scotland, where private cooking is so bad, for giving the best dinners and having the prettiest tables. Her husband was a thief—robbed her of all her money. Fitz knew him well. He was an army man and a gambler, and died leaving his wife penniless. She turned the only thing she knew anything about—giving Society dinners—into account."

"Orebay House,
"North Gate, Regent's Park.

"DEAR DICK,

"You have piqued my curiosity. Your friend Fitz is right and Cook is wrong. If the dinner does not interest you, perhaps the cook will. Can't you spare one evening for your old father, and come to the next? By the way, I managed to get Tinfoil to dine last night again, and he has—in consequence of the excellent dinner, no doubt—given me a hint that we shall get his shipments. You had better see him at his office to-morrow after his second bottle of champagne. Tell him of the cook; it will interest him and serve to remind him of the dinner and his promise."

"Water Lane, Liverpool.

"DEAR PATER,

"We have a Bridge party on here next Wednesday, so I can't get up to sample your new cook-

The Cook

ing; but I will certainly turn up at your last dinner if I am in London."

"*Orebay House,*
"*North Gate, Regent's Park.*

"DEAR DICK,

"Sorry you could not come to the dinner; couldn't fill your place, so I asked the lady if she would like to see how my guests (who, of course, didn't know anything about her) enjoyed her dinner. She was, personally, as great a success as her dinner, which was again A 1."

"*Water Lane, Liverpool.*

"DEAR GUV,

"I'm just back from Queenstown—awful time I've had. As you know, the White Star is too strong for us, but I think we shall get the best of them if I return at once. Therefore cannot dine on Thursday. Hope you will catch Sir Simple Gull—we'll want his support for the new venture. Why not introduce him to the pretty cook? He is a bachelor. Tell him, however, to remember old Weller's advice and 'beware of widders.'"

"*Orebay House,*
"*North Gate, Regent's Park.*

"DEAR DICK,

"Gull couldn't come. So the pretty cook, in cream satin and your poor mother's diamonds, looking every inch a queen, took his place as my *vis-à-vis* at the table. You can, however, see her any time you call here, for in a few days she will be your stepmother."

Shrewd business men, as a rule, prefer a woman for their amanuensis to a man. Women concentrate their minds on their work, they are better at detail and have a more accurate memory, but, above all, they do not talk outside their offices of the business affairs of their employers. A young man is more likely, in the company of his companions, to compare notes; he may also have his own axe to grind, and uses private information, either, in time, to make himself indispensable or to start an office of his own, or "better himself" by going to an opposition firm. Once a woman puts on her hat and jacket and leaves the premises, her mind reverts to her own affairs, her dress, her pleasures or her home, and she never thinks of her official work till she hangs her hat up in the office in the morning, touches up her face with her powder-puff, arranges her hair, dusts her typewriting machine, sharpens her pencil, folds over her notebook and waits for "the Guvnor's" bell to ring.

I have in my time watched many of these young ladies. I have seen them grow from flappers who take your card into the Chief's office, to matured and capable women sitting in the managerial office as business confidantes, consulted on all matters, and sometimes, practically, running the show. Good looks and agreeable manners add to their official value. A man in the same position, having to interview an awkward caller, may adopt the manner of his master. But a confidential secretary with a sweet smile and a musical voice and sympathy—either assumed or real—represents often a triumph for the "boss." To be a friend of such a lady

is of far more value than to be on friendly terms with her employer.

I was struck with this fact one day while in the waiting-room of a large Publishing House.

Around the room, seated on chairs, were a dozen or more men of various ages and sizes and apparently of various degrees of non-success. One very young man, attired in sporting fashion, alone looked confident. The others seemed as miserable as patients in a dentist's waiting-room.

It so happened that the confident youth, in sporting costume, was the first to discover that the busy publisher was not to be caught that day; he had drawn a blank. A boy attendant entered the room with an air of authority, and handing back a bundle of manuscript to the sporting youth said, "Subject ain't in our line."

"Ah, thanks awfully," stammered the youth, blushing, and tapping the side of his rejected manuscript with his cane he sat for a moment grinning at fate, which, to judge from his fixed gaze on the ground, he expected would spring up through a star trap in the floor like the bad demon in a pantomime. The next moment he himself jumped up with a bound and ran after the boy.

"I say, young fellow, tell me, is Miss Emily Standish in?"

"Yer mean Miss Hemily Raddish—'er wot types, with red 'air."

"She has auburn hair and she is an amanuensis and practises stenography."

"I don't know 'er by them long words. We 'ave a

Miss Standish wot 'ammers on a Remington. If you want to see 'er I'll 'oller to 'er has I pass the third floor."

"No, give her this card, and here is sixpence for you."

"She's the best of the crowd," said the boy as he pulled the lift rope and ascended.

Miss Standish soon came running down, expressing surprise and delight at seeing the sporting youth. The conversation was carried on in low tones, but the MS. was seen to change hands once more, and "Hemily Raddish" was heard to whisper as she said good-bye:

"When he's in a good humour I'll do my best. I'll type the first page myself and alter the name."

The sporting youth whispered a few words more, and then she replied with a pleased smile:

"Oh, my name is all right, till you make yours."

One cannot say he has met his own mother, except in a hypothetical sense. However, I can say that I never met a woman so characteristic of the artistic refinement of the well-educated lady of the Early Victorian era as my own mother. She had a remarkable father—Eneas MacKenzie—and, as daughters often "take after" their father, my mother inherited much of my grandfather's sterling qualities. He was a man in advance of his time, and one of his dicta was that women should be independent of their parents. Being an educationalist, he had his daughter taught more thoroughly than was general with young girls of that period, and sent them into the world to teach. My mother, when about seventeen, went over to teach a County family in Wexford,

and after a time met a widower, an English engineer, and married him. I am the youngest son. I left Ireland in my teens and came to London. My mother became a widow and lived her later years in London. I have no relations or connections of any kind in the Emerald Isle.

As daughters take after their fathers, sons take after their mothers. You will find that all through history, so that I owe my maternal parent any aptitude I have for art and my independent and characteristic spirit, particularly my unflagging industry has been handed down from her forefathers. Those who are acquainted with me, erroneously consider certain characteristics of mine are due to my Irish blood. I have not a drop in my veins. Those characteristics are Scotch.

Although by force of circumstances my mother was an educationalist, she was by nature an artist, imbued with the fashion of the Early Victorian era. She painted miniatures and modelled wax flowers, splendidly too, for hers were exhibited in the great '51 Exhibition. She was also remarkably clever in gilt leather work, a style of decoration then much in vogue. In fact, there was nothing she attempted—including photography in its very early days—in which she did not succeed. But it was her charm of manner, her conversation and polish which endeared her to all who came in contact with her. When my father's sight failed, she was obliged to turn her unique accomplishments to account, and she therefore opened a finishing school in Dublin, if it could be called a school, for young Society ladies who had just finished

their education. These young ladies were the daughters of the county families she had previously known and who therefore appreciated her. Her pupils were principally the daughters of Army men, and she, aided by various professors of music, art, and science, "turned out" these young ladies with all the superb finish demanded by an ultra punctilious age, so different from that in which we now live.

For many years I lived north of Regent's Park and almost daily took my exercise on horseback up the Finchley Road through Hendon, round Harrow and so home. The road turning off from Finchley and the encircling corner now known as Golder's Green were quite rural in their surroundings. Gipsy encampments rested by the roadside, a few rustic houses at respectful distances were snugly hidden away in the background, all was peace and quietude and far from the madding crowd of life. Well up the side road, Hendon way, stood a famous girls' school known as Highfield.

This was run by two ladies of the name of Metcalfe, two very remarkable women, who were held in high esteem by the many hundreds of good-class women educated there. It was a school for the better middle-class girl, an establishment quite the best of its class in the vicinity of London. The sisters Metcalfe, Annie and Fanny, came from a well-known family in Cambridgeshire. The family meeting unexpected reverses, the sisters went to Germany to be educated as governesses, but meeting with such cruel treatment they returned to

England in almost a starving condition. In time they started a school, and were just attaining success when an epidemic broke out and practically ruined them. Nothing daunted, they went to Hendon and started afresh, and gradually their school became, as I say, the best near London. The house at Hendon was superbly and artistically furnished, a farm adjoined which supplied the establishment with produce, a large house at Folkestone was run in connection with Highfield for girls when they required a change, and the Metcalfes had also a house in Portman Square for the same purpose. They were both extraordinary workers and, apart from the high education they superintended, with the best professors for each subject, girls were taught how to run a house themselves in a practical way. I met them when I gave my entertainment, drawing and stories entitled "Chalk and Charcoal," at the Steinway Hall. They brought their pupils from Highfield to hear me. In fact, the Metcalfes were up-to-date in everything and so very successful.

Their mother was a remarkably picturesque old lady, who sat in the artistic drawing-room at Highfield like a little queen, with her pure white hair and always a touch of mauve in the ribbons of her dress. During the early eighties her portrait in the Royal Academy was quite one of the pictures of the year. She was then nearly ninety years of age.

I found the Metcalfes very different from the more celebrated Miss Beale at Cheltenham. When lecturing

there at the celebrated boys' college on the "Humours of Parliament," my manager suggested to Miss Beale that I should give this really instructive lecture to the college for girls. She replied that she would not contaminate her pupils by any such thing—the idea of a caricaturist addressing her girls was monstrous.

I have given that same entertainment to thousands and thousands of young women, not only in this country but in America, Canada and Australia, and I have received scores of letters thanking me for giving such a graphic idea of the proceedings of the Houses of Parliament. Girls when they went into Society could then talk of Parliament with some pre-digested knowledge and understand the conversation of men of the world at the dinner-table, excepting those who came from Cheltenham in the days of Miss Beale, who, it must be admitted, in spite of her peculiar narrowness of vision, was an influential woman and a wonderful worker.

Apropos of the above incident, it is interesting to recall that it was at this time arrangements were being made that I should give my "Humours of Parliament" to the Queen at Balmoral. She had expressed a wish to see the way in which her legislators did their work. Unfortunately, and actually when I was on my way to Balmoral, I was stopped by a wire. Her Majesty's neighbour, Lord Glenesk, wrote to inform me that a connection of the Queen's had died that day, and of course all arrangements had to be cancelled.

As I am dealing in this chapter with Victorian

women workers, I cannot, in justice, omit to mention one of the hardest of all workers—the good Queen herself.

The following true anecdote bears upon the punctilious observances that were held so rigidly at that period—and have been so often contrasted, and not often to their advantage, with the present day.

"A Noble Lord, not particularly remarkable for his observance of holy ordinances, arrived at Windsor not a month ago, late one Saturday night. 'I have brought down for your Majesty's inspection,' he said, 'some papers of importance; and as they must be gone into at length, I will not trouble your Majesty with them to-night, but request your attention to them to-morrow morning.' 'To-morrow morning!' repeated the Queen; 'to-morrow is Sunday, my Lord.' 'But business of State, please your Majesty.' 'Must be attended to, I know,' replied the Queen; 'and as, of course, you could not come down earlier to night, I will, if these papers are of such vital importance, attend to them *after we come from church to-morrow morning*.' To church went the Royal party; to church went the Noble Lord, and, much to his surprise, the sermon was on '*the duties of the Sabbath!*' 'How did your Lordship like the sermon?' inquired the Queen. 'Very much, your Majesty,' replied the Nobleman, with the best grace he could. 'I will not conceal from you,' said the Queen, 'that last night I sent the clergyman the text from which he preached. I hope we shall all be the better

for it.' The day passed without a single word on the subject of the 'papers of importance,' which 'must be gone into at length.' His Lordship was—as he always is—graceful and entertaining; and at night, when her Majesty was about to withdraw—'To-morrow morning, my Lord,' she said, 'at any hour you please, as early as seven, if you like, we will go into these papers.' His Lordship could not think of intruding at so early an hour on her Majesty—'Nine would be quite time enough.' 'As they are of importance,' said the Queen—'as they are of importance, my Lord, I would have attended to them earlier, but at nine be it;' and at nine her Majesty was seated ready to receive the Nobleman, who had been taught a lesson on the duties of the Sabbath."

As soon as I was of an age to understand anything, and in that I include woman as understood by a child's precosity, the Victorian woman who fascinated me most was Florence Nightingale.

My earliest recollection was retrospective, for I was born at the time "The Lady with the Lamp" became famous at the Crimea. A coloured print of her moving among the poor wounded soldiers in hospital at Scutari hung on my nursery wall; anything in the shape of a picture attracted my infant gaze, but this coloured print had faded and its frame tarnished before I was old enough to comprehend its meaning. And so Florence Nightingale was my first study of Victorian women. I felt through the coloured print that I had a claim on

MISS FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE

her all my life, and I take my hat off to her statue in Waterloo Place whenever I pass.

Perhaps the very worst kind of Victorian women of my infanthood were the sick nurses. They were bad, and if they were not wholly bad they were indifferent. The only good one among them was Florence Nightingale. Mr. Lytton Strachey in his *Eminent Victorians* suggests as much in his remarkable account of Florence Nightingale, when writing of her parent's horror when, at the age of twenty-five, she made her decision to adopt nursing as her sphere.

"And, indeed, the difficulties in her path were great. For not only was it an almost unimaginable thing in those days for a woman of means to make her own way in the world and to live in independence, but the particular profession for which Florence was clearly marked out both by her instincts and her capacities was at that time a peculiarly disreputable one. A 'nurse' meant then a coarse old woman, always ignorant, usually dirty, often brutal, a Mrs. Gamp, in bunched-up sordid garments, tippling at the brandy-bottle or indulging in worse irregularities. The nurses in the hospitals were especially notorious for immoral conduct; sobriety was almost unknown among them; and they could hardly be trusted to carry out the simplest medical duties. Certainly, things have changed since those days; and that they *have* changed is due, far more than to any other human being, to Miss Nightingale herself."

Things certainly have changed since then, and in no

direction greater than with our hospitals and nurses. We have no Mrs. Gamps now, but hosts and hosts of Florence Nightingales, of whom she will always be fondly remembered as the great pioneer who reformed the whole world by her own unaided efforts.

CHAPTER VII

A WORD ABOUT SOME OLD WOMEN

INTELLECTUALLY a woman is not really entertaining until she is over forty. I prefer chatting to a woman of double that age to any girl I have met of eighteen. Old ladies in all spheres of life, if endowed with an average intelligence, fascinate me. To listen to them is far more entertaining than to read a novel, and in the case of educated women who have moved in society their talk is a veritable autobiography. A woman with a past who refers to herself as "a woman of the world," is always a problem well worth solving. All their arts are mere camouflage. To shut one's eyes and wait for those subtle touches of human nature which the garrulousness of age is sure to disclose, and then to separate truth from fiction, supplies a delicate pastime which affords food for much reflection.

Undoubtedly the most brilliant *grande dame* of my time was Lady Dorothy Nevill. I only met this fascinating lady at Society crushes; although I had no chance of conversing with her as an artist, I could read in that bright little face a whole library of autobiography. She was a little slim woman with a face yellow and wrinkled like a Normandy pippin, surrounded with a profusion of black ringlets, strongly reminding one of

her great friend, long since departed, Lord Beaconsfield. Here was a woman who had lived in Society under five sovereigns, who had known every one worth knowing for over eighty years. She had known the ill-fated beauty, Lady Blessington, and Count d'Orsay, dear old Samuel Rogers, Tom Moore, the Irish poet. She knew Charles Dickens and Darwin, she was a friend of Cobden, Gladstone, Palmerston—in fact every one in all walks of life. She moved with the times and knew Lord Randolph Churchill, A. J. Balfour and the rising—and falling—politicians right up to her death a year before the Great War. She was up to date in everything but her personal appearance, her gowns were exactly the same as those worn in the Early Victorian era. It was said of her that among the changes which she noticed was the gradual disappearance of the professional conversationalist. In her early days he was a feature at every dinner—sometimes a brilliant, wealthy and powerful man like Bernal Osborne, very often a poor parasite who paid for his dinner with his tongue. Lady Dorothy always contended that Society had changed for the worse in many ways. She had retained a certain early scorn for mere wealth, unaccompanied by charm or ability. She yearned for the days of brilliant talk at the dinner-table—people, she said, used to converse in the old days; now they only chattered. She had an abiding horror of what came to be called the "smart set." One of the many causes of the great change, she used to say, was the enormous increase in the wealth of individuals. When Samuel

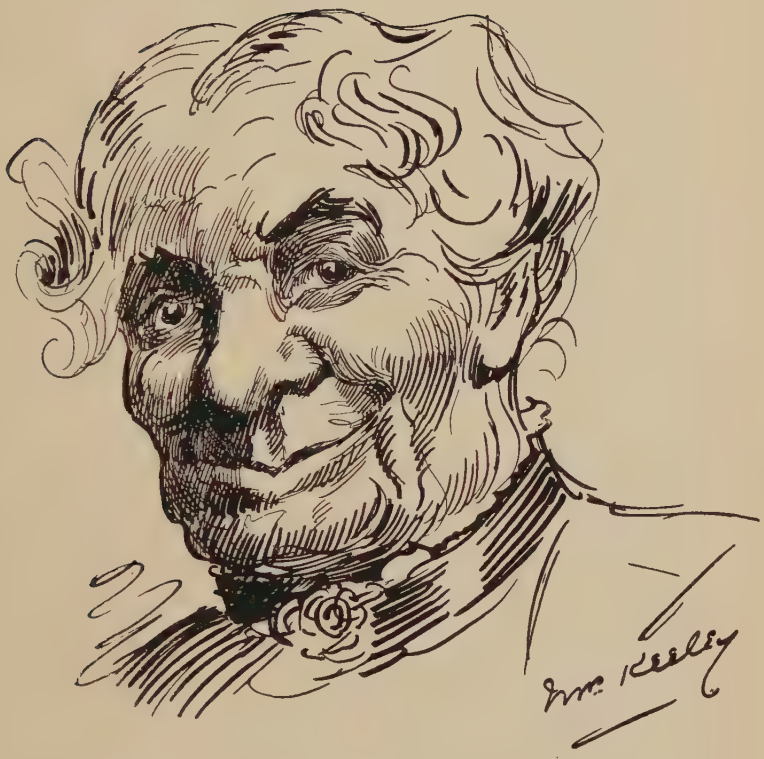
Warren, whom of course she knew, wanted to write of a man of boundless wealth, according to the ideas of his time, he called his book *Ten Thousand a Year*. She tells how she herself and her sister were given a dress allowance of £35 and £40 respectively by their adoring father. And finally, as an indication of another change in her times, she remembered the day when no great lady could walk through the streets of London without having a tall footman at her back.

Mrs. Keeley, the celebrated actress, was one of the brightest old women I ever met. I was not born when she and her husband were the favourites of the London stage, yet I was over forty before I made her acquaintance. It was at Lady Jeune's. I took her in to dinner. Her face was dried and wrinkled, with two little bright eyes. She had short, silvery curly hair and she was bubbling with bright, witty conversation. She was altogether an exceptionally vivacious old lady without being old, yet twice my age. We got on very well until I mentioned her son-in-law. Then she became serious and awkwardly confidential. Her son-in-law was at the time the most advertised and popular police magistrate of the London district. He had been a very successful criminal lawyer, but his practice, or his voice, or both, disappeared, and he accepted the fifteen hundred a year and made, in my opinion, a very bad magistrate. He used the bench to feed the press with sensations. He posed as the friend and protector of the poor children. Now I happen to number among my friends more than one sincere, good, conscientious

police magistrate, who without self-advertisement or press puffing, or, indeed, without any publicity whatever, do far more for the poor and say nothing about it.

Well, to return to his mother-in-law, dear old soul, who out-lived him and lived to a tremendous age, retaining all her faculties to the end. She surprised me at that dinner at Lady Jeune's by going off at a tangent when I casually mentioned her son-in-law. "He murdered my daughter—that I am convinced of," she said emphatically, "and that I shall believe to my dying day, so pray do not mention the scoundrel's name in my presence." Mrs. Keeley's daughter was found dead in bed, with a handkerchief which had been saturated with chloroform tied over her mouth. The explanation made and accepted was, I believe, that the poor wife was suffering from toothache and had applied the handkerchief to her own mouth to relieve the pain.

I next met this remarkable woman at the Bath Hotel, Felixstowe, in 1890, whither she had gone after laying the foundation-stone of the new Lyceum Theatre at Ipswich. The old Ipswich Theatre was one of the most famous in England. Mrs. Keeley informed me that ten years before Mr. Pickwick was supposed to have stayed at the "White Hart." She made her first appearance at Ipswich on the stage. It was there, also, Garrick first appeared, and I imagine in later years Johnny Toole. Kean acted in the theatre, as well as Bannister, Incledon and other celebrated theatrical stars. Mrs. Keeley was a fascinating, pretty little


Wm Keeley

actress, a great favourite in her day, and before she married the equally popular favourite Keeley, was known as Miss Goward. This was many years before I met her, and there she was still bright and vivacious and knitting without the assistance of spectacles.

Edmund Yates was a man much beloved by some and utterly detested and feared by others. I regret to say I did not see much of him. Whenever we met he was very friendly, and I did some work for him over which he was extremely appreciative. The last was a little commission to draw a series of headings for permanent use in the *World*. I think they were used for some time. I recollect going down to Brighton to lunch with him and talk them over. That must have been quite late in his life, in fact not long before he died. His beautiful wife was very old and very feeble and petulant. I took quite an interest in observing her, for I had heard Du Maurier and others, who knew her in her prime, loud in their praises of her charms and beauty. Du Maurier was always, according to his own confession, in love with fine, handsome women, married and unmarried, and Mrs. Edmund Yates was his special favourite. It must have been he, or perhaps it was Frank Finlay, anyway it was some special friend of the Yateses, who told me of an extraordinary case of infatuation, quite a little romance in its way, or perhaps only a burlesque.

In the sixties and seventies and part of the eighties a familiar and rather ludicrous figure in London

Bohemian Society was a brother of the late Lord Burnham —"Daddy" Levy. Every one called him "Daddy." What his other names were I never knew. He was a bachelor, very rich and hospitable; an insignificant little Israelite, with a piping voice. The Yateses were living in Portland Place, and one fine day "Daddy" drove up in a gorgeous carriage, the story goes, with four horses and an outrider. As soon as the door was opened he rushed up to the drawing-room, to the beautiful Mrs. Yates, and throwing himself on his knees in front of the alarmed lady, he called out: "Fly with me! My carriage is at the door. There is not a moment to be lost! I adore you—it is now or never!"

At that moment the massive form of Edmund Yates entered quietly, and "Daddy's" friend, whose home he had come to wreck and whose wife he had come to take away by force, spoke quietly, even sympathetically:

"Daddy, daddy, naughty little daddy, come, this won't do!" and taking the little trembling libertine up in his arms he walked downstairs with him and deposited him outside the hall door.

At one of "Daddy's" dinners Sir Henry Irving was present, when the conversation turned on the subject of luck. Irving maintained that there was no such thing as luck. Success was only achieved by a man's ability and hard work. "What do you say, Irving? What do you say, that there is no such thing as luck? Why, you fill the Lyceum every night and there's not a dozen people can hear a word you

say, and you tell us you don't believe in luck!" There was a general laugh and no offence taken. It was only "Daddy," and every one liked him.

Yates had much power with his friends and he was often consulted in critical matters concerning them. I recollect one evening at a *Punch* dinner Burnand being very perturbed by a strange coincidence which had happened in the Haymarket Theatre. He had written a play for the actor manager in which a wife discovers her husband, who is an actor, in a compromising position with an actress. Well, this contretemps actually happened in real life! The scene was a reality. Such a scene too! The play was postponed, the actress had to leave. The wife, who, scandal pretty freely said, had taken a similar part in real life more than once, was naturally furious and she and her husband parted. It was agreed to leave the matter in the hands of Edmund Yates. Both parties—husband and wife—met at his house by appointment. The wife was taken to Yates in the drawing-room, the husband was left in charge of a friend of mine and mutual friend of all parties concerned, in a lower room. It is, in fact, from this friend I heard the story. Presently the husband was summoned into the presence of his wife and Yates. He was severely reprimanded by Edmund, and half an hour afterwards husband and wife drove together through the West End and the Park, to show themselves, and to put a stop to any rumours of a separation or divorce that might have resulted.

When Technical Instruction first came to the front,

I, an outsider, made one of a Parliamentary commission who travelled abroad to inspect Italian and Austrian methods.

On our homeward journey the chairman and I broke away from the rest of the party and journeyed to Meran, the old capital of Tyrol, to visit the famous authoress, a delightful old lady, Mary Howitt. She chatted about many of the interesting people she and her husband had known, and I made bold to suggest to our mutual friend that he should prevail on her to write her reminiscences—which she did.

Her companion in her old age was her daughter, Miss Margaret Howitt, an exceptionally fascinating lady, whose many virtues had been extolled to us with great pride. We spent a delightful afternoon together, while my friend, William Woodall, remained and chatted with her mother. As my friend and I were leaving Meran, Miss Howitt said to me:

"If you have a daughter, Mr. Furniss, I should like to meet her."

And, curious to say, my daughter often reminds me, in her literary taste, of Miss Margaret Howitt.

Later on I received a presentation copy of Mary Howitt's Autobiography, in which she kindly refers to my visit in the following passage:

"Meggis and Alice were in the town with genial Mr. Harry Furniss, who was sketching; not 'versing or prosing it,' but 'picturesquing it everywhere.' They showed him the old Burg, the town-house of Margaret Maultasch, with all its quaint old furniture, with which

Mary Howitt
1883

he was delighted. They stopped old men, old women, children, everything that was effective, posed them, got up groups instanter; all were sketched, and people were delighted. It was the merriest, most amusing morning. Mr. Furniss lives at the bottom of the Avenue Road, in a house that was not built, I think, in our time. He has joined this Royal Commission of Inquiry into Technical Education, not at their expense, but his own, and gives a most amusing account of the very hard work it has been to him. They posted on, and he wanted to stay; and they said, 'Now look, Furniss, here is a magnificent scene for you. Take it all into your mind, make notes of it, and you'll have a splendid picture.' But that is not what he wants, but rather what he has been doing in Meran this morning: getting true little bits of picturesqueness that abound here, and which could never be imagined. We wanted him to stay a day or two with us, as he found Meran such a peculiarly pictorial place, and then catch up his companions farther on the tour; but he thought it wisest not to part from them."

When Miss Howitt and I returned from our pleasant ramble through picturesque Meran, we found that William Woodall, then in the Gladstonian Ministry, had crammed the dear old lady with Gladstonian hallucinations about Ireland. Parnellism and Crime was then the subject of the hour—Woodall, a High Priest of the G.O.M. fetish, astonished the shrewd Mary Howitt by assuring her that he did not fear Fenian malice and revenge; it was only, he said, an epidemic

in Ireland, such as occurs again and again and then passes away. He painted a glowing picture of the Irish question all *couleur de rose*, peace and goodwill. I am writing this thirty-nine years after that interview, and I have just read in the morning papers pages of dastardly crime, bloodshed and rebellion in Ireland, largely due to the crass stupidity of the G.O.M. and his worshippers in the eighties.

Lady Burdett-Coutts stands out from among the Victorian women as one of the most popular and certainly as one of the foremost figures in my category of good women.

Wherever art and drama were concerned, there she was to be seen. At every one of Sir Henry Irving's first nights at the Lyceum Theatre she occupied the same box; so unfailing in her regularity that rumour declared she actually financed Irving's productions. This Irving indignantly denied. Lady Coutts was a great admirer of Irving—that was all.

I saw her also at Christie's Sale Room, St. James's, when masterpieces were up for sale. Once I made a sketch of her, catalogue in hand, standing among crowds of interested habitués, and I here reproduce a portion of the drawing which originally appeared in *Punch*.

Referring to her universal popularity, and more particularly to the worshipping adoration with which she was regarded by her protégés in the East End, I recall a tiny but characteristic anecdote of an incident that took place on the evening of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. The streets were stiff with sightseers and the road was

LADY BURDETT-COUTTS AT A SALE AT CHRISTIE'S

A corner of a drawing in "Punch"

blocked with vehicles slowly pursuing their way under the most wonderfully illuminated London. Engineered by the police, passage was slow, as torpid as a giant snake, pauses were long and frequent. In Piccadilly, as the dense throng stood packed outside the brilliantly lit clubs, it paused deliberately outside one house with curved windows and less gorgeous illuminations. The people began cheering—calling. Some in carriages stood up, others on tops of chartered buses leant forward —those in tiny carts and motor-cars were no less strenuous in their efforts to obtain recognition of their desires. Suddenly a hush spread over the vast sea of people. A slim form, supported by several ladies and men, was seen silhouetted against the light; it stepped on the balcony and stood there leaning tremulously against the window. A great hoarse roar spread over the night, cheers, snatches of songs and wild cries of welcome and delight, and in the tiniest of tiny barrows a fat woman struggled to her feet, nearly lifting the small donkey fastened to the shafts off his four hoofs, and yelled above all the clamour, " The best woman in London—God bless her ! "

It was Baroness Burdett-Coutts.

Some years ago when touring round the country giving my " Humours of Parliament " at various places, I arrived early one morning at the old Assembly Rooms in a Midland town in which I was to appear that evening and found my way to the " Artistes' room." An old woman was on her knees occupied with a pail of water scrubbing the floor. The apartment resembled the

green-room of a theatre, decorated with portraits of old-time actors and actresses, old playbills of a bygone age. The old charwoman, who, one could see, had at one time been attractive, for her features were good and her eyes bright and intelligent, informed me that the building in "my time" was the only place in the town for theatricals and the room had never been altered.

"I, and the old piano in the corner, are the only two things left of the old days. I am the daughter of the doorkeeper when plays were acted here. He knew all the great performers of those days, he did, and so did I, in a way, sir, too."

"That's Sims Reeves's portrait," I remarked, looking at the pictures on the walls.

"So it is, sir, that's the great Sims Reeves; I was only sixteen when he came to sing here the last time. Ah, what a favourite he was too, he always sang to full houses, he did, bless his soul!"

"You remember him then?"

"I shall never forget him, sir. He has given me a lesson on that selfsame old piano you see in the corner. Every time I dust it I think of him, I do, and I seem to hear his wonderful voice; but bless you, sir, there ain't an ivory left in that 'ere piano, any more than there is in this old mouth of mine, yet when I sang for Mr. Reeves I had the finest set of teeth any girl of sixteen summers ever had, and I had a voice too. I was trying one of Mr. Reeves's songs one morning at the piano; I think it was 'Come into the garden, Maud,' which he had been singing there the night before, when

MRS. HOWARD PAUL

in he walked. He was very good to me he was, and told me not to be frightened. He said I'd make a singer some day; and would you believe it, sir, he went over that song with me, and gave me my first lesson. Then he sang the song himself, yes, he did, sir, all for me, and just at the end of it he stopped, and just didn't he swear! He said his throat was wrong, the factory's smoke had done it, and went on awful, and then he left the rooms and went back to his hotel, he did, and didn't come back to sing that night. They put out notices to say that Mr. Reeves was taken bad, and other attractions would be given instead, for the public was here early. That old manager—you see his portrait over the mantelpiece—didn't he go on, not much! He said as Sims Reeves was drunk, which as I know he wasn't, and every one said as if he had been sober he would have appeared—lies and ignorance I call it," she exclaimed, as she sloshed more water out of the pail. "I know from experience one can't sing if there is any weakness in the throat."

"Then you know something about it," I suggested.

"Lor' bless you, I should think so. I was on the boards for years. Meeting Mr. Reeves in this room started me. I studied singing with the choir-master of our parish church—I was young and—well, see that young chit in tights framed up there, that's me—Principal Boy in the pantomime. Lor' bless you, sir, I sang in all the music-halls in the Midlands for years; no sentimental tosh, you bet, but character songs. Mrs. Howard Paul—do you remember her?" she asked.

"Just," I replied. "She was to the front when I was a little boy; I remember her in military get-up singing 'Follow the Drum.'"

"That's it! That's it! I sang that very song; she gave me the costume for it, that very costume you see in her portrait behind you. But lor', she wasn't a Sims Reeves, none of them was. Ah, they say he drank; not he, as I know, he was only nursing his vocal chords—bless his memory!"

CHAPTER VIII

SOME PRETTY WOMEN I REMEMBER

THE "fashionable beauty" craze in the eighties was the most idiotic wave of vulgarity and snobbery of our times. The Prince of Wales (our late King) may have admired Mrs. L. or Mrs. W. as any Royal personage may admire a picture painted by A., B., or C., but why the public should therefore be thrown into hysterics of admiration passes all understanding. I was commissioned by the *Illustrated London News* and other periodicals to follow that sea of snobbery and sketch Mrs. L. at a Bazaar in the Albert Hall and Mrs. W. at Newmarket. But I might have sketched a lunatic asylum and sent it to my editor, for no sane people fitted the scandalous scenes in the wake of the idol of the hour.

Mrs. George Cornwallis West, at one time, as Lady Randolph Churchill, a possible starter in the beauty race, in her reminiscences mentions this "Professional Beauty" craze, remarking:

"So great was the enthusiasm created by the beauty of the 'Jersey Lily,' as she was called, that in the height of the season I have seen people standing on chairs in the Row to get a peep of her. . . . In one of his letters to me while I was in Ireland, Randolph writes:

'I dined with Lord Wharncliffe last night, and took in to dinner a Mrs. Langtry, a most beautiful creature—quite unknown, very poor, and they say has but one black dress.'"

Mrs. Cornwallis West also writes apropos of the "Jersey Lily": "Artists extolled Mrs. Langtry's classical Greek profile, golden hair, and wonderful column-like throat, graced with the three '*plis de Vénus*,' which made her an ideal subject for their brushes and chisels."

Mrs. Langtry's profile was certainly Greek and her expression was very fascinating, in fact, so far as I could judge, her greatest charm was her expression. Her hair, when I sketched it and at all times when I have seen her since, was certainly not golden, and in my humble opinion her short neck gave the appearance of high shoulders, and was so marked that I read of her "wonderful column-like throat" with amazement. In those days I could have turned my back on any of these "Professional Beauties" and found half a dozen in the crowd of snobs following Royalty's boomed beauty unprofessional and unnoticed beauties much more qualified to be models for artists and sculptors than those so-called "P.B.s." It was all a lottery, a recognition by a great personage, and a pleasing-looking lady becomes a great work of art. Both are, from the moment of special Royal favour, surrounded and gaped at, photographed and worshipped by the great Snobland in London. What a lottery it is to be sure!

There *was* a lady really so dignified and beautiful

Mrs Cornwallis West.

that artists did surround her and discuss her charms. When at the Private View of the Royal Academy they formed a ring round her. That was genuine admiration. The snob gazers saw her not. She was a lady of good position with several black dresses, and very well off. Her chance came to be hall-marked by Royalty. It was at a ball in the county in which she lived with her husband and family. The late King was there. He saw her, admired her and expressed a wish to dance with her, but he asked her name. There the chance of her lifetime was lost. The King mistook her for the wife of her brother-in-law, whom he disliked, and he did not request her to join in the dance! I have the story from her own daughter, so I am sure it is a true one.

In reading the reminiscences of the wife of Lord Randolph Churchill, "Plucky little Randy," as he was called, I am struck with an idea that the first letter of the first word in those so oft-repeated in the eighties, "Plucky little Randy," might, if omitted, be more appropriate to the man. He was lucky—lucky to find a row of old women on the front bench of the House of Commons and lucky to find such a wife. He made the most of the former and not enough of the latter.

Every one behind the scenes in politics—and I was well behind the scenes in those stirring days—knew this very well. Randolph Churchill was an impulsive political opportunist and nothing more. His wife admits he committed political suicide without giving

her the slightest hint he contemplated such a thing. His bosom friend, the man who had been his parliamentary foster-mother, Sir Henry Drummond Wolff, in his reminiscences says precisely the same thing. Sir Henry was also with Randolph at the critical moment and knew nothing. If not his friend, no doubt his wife would have counselled him and cautioned him in time. The fact is, he was a slave to dissipation and that mad act was the beginning of senility.

Mrs. Langtry—now Lady de Bathe—was certainly a very fascinating and clever woman in Society, and in many other walks of life, including the stage. I came across George Meredith's opinion of her as an actress (and the great novelist analysed women probably more skilfully than any other brother of the pen); it is as follows:

"She is the ideal Shepherdess of the Chromolithographs. She has to faint, and she takes three quaint strides to fall on the ready knees of the dame prepared to receive her. She has to make love, and she does it with all her arms and breasts. Very handsome—not a shade of mystery or variableness: the heroine for bold dragoons."

When she appeared in *Linda Grey*, a writer in criticizing the piece wrote thus of the "Jersey Lily":

"But to tell this story cost five mortal acts and five costumes for Mrs. Langtry. I do not grudge the costumes. They were eminently fitting (that is no wanton jest), for Mrs. Langtry was representing an actress, and, if such a part does not justify gowns

galore, I should like to know what does. It thrilled me to hear the hurried whispers of ladies just behind who were rapidly comparing notes of the wonderful cloak in the last act, and doubtless taking photographs with the unerring camera of the feminine eye, to be presented to the dazzled dressmaker next day. But I always find Mrs. Langtry a good deal more interesting than her dresses. I am continually wondering whether that voice which sometimes comes so near the utterance of real intensity, whether those eyes which sometimes seem about to reveal a soul, will ever achieve the true purpose of playing. . . . Mrs. Langtry is still a study for expectation and perplexity."

The most beautiful and graceful Society woman of the seventies was the Lady Dudley of that day. I met her once when one chilly, foggy morning in early spring I was on the banks of the river making some notes of the Varsity crews in training. Where I stood there were very few people about, and here a steam launch made for the shore. Out of it stepped Lady Dudley. She wore a rich green costume trimmed with brown fur which set off her beautiful auburn hair and complexion to the best advantage. I thought her a perfect picture and at once made a sketch of her. She was accompanied by Goldie, the famous Cambridge stroke, who had taken her for a trip while he coached the new crew, and as he stopped to speak to the skipper, Lady Dudley came over to where I was standing to see my sketch. I quickly turned over the page in my sketch-book rather than show my feeble and perhaps not

flattering portrait of her, and showed the beauty a caricature I had made of the beast of a boatman who had hold of the boathook. Her face lacked expression, but she smiled at the sketch and passed on. For years afterwards I frequently saw her in a carriage driving close to where I lived and worked near Regent's Park, with her picturesque but eccentric husband, whom Dame Rumour, if she had not practised a practical joke on us outsiders, declared nursed some silly hallucination, expecting himself to become a mother! A unique and interesting event, which, as it happened, could have only been portrayed by an Aubrey Beardsley, but one that would have given me the opportunity of adding his lordship's portrait to other old women I introduce into these pages.

One of the prettiest women I have ever met was a Mrs. Ibbotson. I was a youth fresh to London and visited her and her remarkably good-looking family, in a house they had taken for the season in Phillimore Gardens, Kensington. Her husband was a distant relative of mine, I believe, then head of the big engineering Sheffield firm, Ibbotson Brothers. His wife was the beautiful daughter of the once celebrated American sculptor, Hiram Powers, who lived with his family in Florence. He made quite a sensation in the early Victorian Era by his beautiful statue, "The Greek Slave." All his work was of the same Greek classic head. An English visitor at his studios one day remarked upon the similarity. "Yes," replied Powers, "I have only one model for the heads, but several, of

Brown
Green
Lady Dudley

course, for the figures, the finest Italian models I can find."

"Then who sits for your beautiful heads?"

"I'll introduce you to her now—she is my daughter."

That was Ibbotson's introduction to his future wife.

When I met her she was stoutish—but had retained her beautiful looks. Her children were all good-looking, and her sister sang almost as well as any Italian. They looked upon themselves as Americans. The American singer—Madame Antoinette Stirling—had just then made a success singing Sullivan's "Lost Chord." As Mrs. Ibbotson and her sister, Miss Power, lived in Florence they knew nothing about the song. I sent a copy of the "Lost Chord," and next time I visited Phillimore Gardens Miss Power sang it to me. I recollect her saying that the line, "I struck one chord of music," was absurd, as there were really "two chords."

Recently I came across a paragraph in a book, or newspaper, relating how Sullivan discovered the same fact, but too late to make an alteration, but no one had ever noticed it. But, as Miss Powers discovered it, possibly scores of other people did so as well. It was, however, before the days of the "popular press," and people did not write their discoveries and opinions on every detail in life, and enclose their photograph, to the newspapers.

Mrs. Ibbotson could never be induced to live out of Florence, so her husband, "the mon fra Sheffield,"

had to journey over the Continent to spend his week-end with his family.

The daughter of a Hanoverian Count, who married the Duke of Manchester, was looked upon as one of the beauties of the day. She subsequently married the Duke of Devonshire, then Lord Hartington. The Duke of Devonshire, who died in March 1908, aged seventy, had been for years one of the most prominent figures in English politics, principally as Lord Hartington, when he took an active part in affairs, in name at least. A more inactive man in brain surely never lived in party politics. It is a well-known fact that he loathed politics, he was totally unfitted for a public life, but he was told that it was his duty as a man of position to enter the political arena and he gloomily complied. Then he sat down, pulled his hat over his eyes, thrust his hands into his trousers pockets and went to sleep, horribly bored with the whole thing. He was roused up and placed on his feet and told to make a speech, but he could not, his mind would not work, his words would not come, and when they did he had such a malformed mouth he couldn't get 'em out. "Speaking with a potato in his mouth" is a much older saying than the Duke's day, but if ever it applied to anyone it surely did to him.

When later as a Minister he had to speak it is said he suffered. Certainly his face assumed a death-like pallor and the perspiration on his brow was visible to the naked eye. And then his attempt to speak! He would rise, and, once up, there he would remain.

Brevity is the soul of wit, but the Duke, not having an iota of wit in his composition, made up the deficiency by long-drawn-out dullness. His struggles to get his mother tongue expressed with the unnatural tongue Nature had endowed him with was as painful an exhibition as one ever saw in public.

In the case of any ordinary man this defect would have been sufficient to ruin a public career. In the Duke's case it was the very thing that made it! But, then, recollect, he was a Duke. His inarticulate meanderings were so dull that I have seen him, when leader in the House of Commons, stop in the middle of an important speech, put his hand to his mouth and yawn—which made his best friends, the entire House and the reporters yawn too. The reporters were the Duke's best friends, for they always made him "read well," and no doubt the majority of people judge men by the speeches they read with little idea of how they are delivered. Even when the Duke made an official statement in the House, he could not rouse himself to keep awake, and once, when he stopped and had a long-drawn-out yawn, he positively apologized to the House by saying he found it so inordinately dull he couldn't help himself, at which the House cheered. When he yawned in the middle of his maiden speech, Disraeli, who keenly watched all new men, and was a capital judge of them, exclaimed, "He'll do! To any one who can betray such languor under such circumstances the highest post in the gift of the Commons should be open."

This languor and yawning gave him in the eyes of the phlegmatic British public a reputation for wisdom and reserved force which he never lost. He was fond of horses, so found much favour with Royalty; he was a sportsman in the same languid way he was a statesman, though I have seen him in the paddock at Newmarket sponge his horse's mouth out after the race.

His marriage was typical of the yawning Duke. He fell in love with this beautiful and clever lady of foreign extraction, but when she preferred a Duke and married, Lord Hartington, he waited, yawned and waited. Years passed. The lady became a widow and he a Duke. Then he proposed again and married her.

Besides yawning the Duke had an unpleasant habit which shall be nameless. There is a story told of a Duchess crying out as the Duke entered: "Oh, here is the Duke of Devonshire. For goodness' sake give me my gloves! I couldn't shake hands with the horrid man without them."

His wife, by the way, was long before he married her his chief adviser and friend. She was a tremendous power in politics. I have elsewhere referred to some offence I gave a personage of the highest rank by depicting, in *Punch*, well-known ladies with patches on their faces, a custom of the Georgian period that it was thought at the time would come into vogue again. On the Duchess of Manchester's face I gave a black patch, a silhouette portrait of Lord Hartington—all the patches were portraits in my drawings. This aroused Royal anger and my editor was reprimanded.

When the Duchess of Manchester married again and became the Duchess of Devonshire, a play was produced in London, which proved a great success, in which a Duchess, rising suddenly from the card-table, when she had lost, says: "Now I must go; I hear the Duke snoring." This also gave Royal offence and the management was reprimanded!

Of course the yawning Duke was prey for pictorial satire; he was also so very unattractive it was difficult to avoid caricature. So, when he was the guest of the Royal Academicians at their annual dinner, he went for us! As if the Royal Academicians had anything to do with caricaturists or outside artists of any kind.

Lady Arthur Butler, whom I met on board the *Teutonic* the first time I crossed the Atlantic, was considered then one of the prettiest Americans married to a peer. Of course women do not look their best while crossing the Atlantic, but I could not see in Lady Arthur any claim to be considered a beauty. She was somewhat attractive and vivacious at times, but one would have, I think, considered her hardly so cheerful as many American women one meets. Perhaps this may have been due to the fact that her husband—a most genial and delightful man—who had great expectations of inheriting Lord Lismore's beautiful Irish estates, found himself cut out by Lord Ormonde's young daughter, who also came in for the London house.

Lord and Lady Arthur Butler and I were on very friendly terms on the voyage, but the nearer we got to the States the less friendly her ladyship became, and

when Coney Island was sighted I was entirely slighted by the lady. It is an extraordinary fact how Americans become more American as they return to their own country: their appreciation of the Old Country and its people disappears in exact ratio to the distance they travel away from England. I have noticed this on every journey I have made to the States, but in the case of Lady Arthur Butler it was so marked I mentioned it to her genial Irish husband, who informed me that his wife lacked humour. I had, I may acknowledge, made several caricatures on board, not of the passengers, but of public men in America and England, which were put up for auction for the fund always raised for the Sailors' Hospital and other charities, which she failed to appreciate in the right light, that was all.

I recall an amusing incident in connection with the sale of my drawings. The auctioneer was a very witty American, who informed the passengers in the saloon that he never had a very high opinion of my work, but now that I was dead there was a certain increased value in these as mementoes, and after a brief obituary oration he proceeded to knock them down.

I was on my way to pay some private visits in America and see that great country for the first time—not in search of the almighty dollar. I wanted to see the social side of life in the States, which is closed to one out to make money, and I soon discovered that Lady Arthur Butler's aloof manner to one of my profession, or indeed to any profession (for we had Edward Lloyd on board, and a celebrated Italian caricaturist), was general in the States.

Lady Arthur Butler

Although several of my "patrons," members of the Upper Ten, made much of me, and frequently invited me to their social gatherings, and although I saw and heard a great deal that would be interesting reading, it is not my intention in this volume to deal with the by-ways and queer ways of Victorian Society. Perhaps I can make the inevitable exception, by recording an incident that happened when the members of the Two Pins Club (a riding club of which I was a member) were paying one of their equestrian visits to Newmarket.

We were the guests of our brother member, the late Lord Burnham, for the July meeting at his house close to the Heath. I recollect one day early, before the quiet gathering under the trees—so delightfully characteristic of the July gathering—seeing a beautiful Countess and her sister alight from a dog-cart just as King Edward and his Queen walked on to the scene. Hardly any one was about. I, being quite close, noted the King shake hands with the Countess and her sister and take the elder of the two up to the Queen to introduce her. The Queen immediately turned her back and walked away. The lady with the Countess was one of the notorious "fashionable beauties" of the day.

As all books of reference write me down as

HARRY FURNISS *caricaturist*,

in spite of practising many other things, I must accept being so branded, which somewhat handicaps me in dealing with the subject, women.

Women do not like caricature, with few exceptions

they do not understand it. They only see in it something ugly and offensive, and look upon the caricaturist as a man with a contorted mind incapable of appreciating the beautiful.

Now, were I a painter, I would devote myself to painting portraits of beautiful and interesting women. Were I a dramatist, I would write plays in which woman should be shown to the best advantage and always triumph. Were I a poet, the charm of woman should be my perpetual theme. Being a caricaturist, I reserve my satire for men, and have seldom in my life caricatured a reputable woman—when she is young.

LORD MILLAIS

CHAPTER IX

PAINTERS OF WOMEN I HAVE MET

PORTRAITS of pretty women by clever artists are things of beauty and a joy for ever—particularly joyous to the art dealers—and are, although inadequate, the record of pretty women of the time, and the Victorian era has perhaps as good a record as any period, though not such a popular one, perhaps, as the day of Reynolds, Gainsborough and Lawrence.

It is the most trying branch of all art to practise: the portrait is the thing; it may fail in the painter's ambition in respect of technique, for it is that which lives and increases in value long after the sitter is forgotten. There is the difficulty of pleasing the sitter or her friends and relations, and there is also the greater difficulty—the problems of the craft. I forget which of our old-time portrait painters—but I imagine it was Gainsborough—it was who idealized all the women who sat to him, and by degrees he descended from the heights of imagination to the features of his sitters, until some one said: "Why that's Lady 'This' or Mrs. So-and-so." He then left off painting.

Our modern painter Sargent, however, pursued his way until he got the living image. If the great Sargent's sitters were vulgar, so were their portraits.

Besides his wonderful technique, his paintings have a value of their own, they are realistic and faithful representations of his sitters. As a caricaturist, I take my hat off to him. He is doing what we think and hope we do without the colour; ours are just penny plain—not two thousand pounds coloured.

For a season I gave an entertainment at the Steinway Hall and elsewhere entitled "Chatter and Charcoal," in which I told stories and made drawings on a huge screen. I worked in brushwork and not charcoal—but that is a detail. I frequently aided charity entertainments, and one of these was held in a large house at Hyde Park "lent" for the purpose. When it came to my turn I had discovered, to my chagrin, that the host and his daughters had been made celebrated by their remarkable portraits painted by Sargent and exhibited in the Royal Academy, and they were present.

Now, it so happened one of my efforts was the transformation of hieroglyphics into portraits—caricatures of these very people, depicted in the style of Sargent. I had therefore, on the spur of the moment, to change my performance.

Lord Millais has handed down scores of beautifully painted aristocratic English women with that refinement and purity so peculiar to his age—and his art. His pictures of women and children are enchanting and representative of his various styles. Simplicity of costume showed him at his best, but through force of circumstances he had to vary it.

I saw a good deal of Millais at the Garrick Club, and

frequently had a chat with that unaffected, jolly, John-Bullish great man. He was very complimentary to me on my drawings of young girls. "Yes," I remarked, "young girls are delightful to paint, but we black-and-white artists, unless we draw fanciful subjects, are compelled nowadays to show them as half-grown-up women, frequently mere fashion-plates."

"Many of our portraits are the same, my dear Furniss, mere coloured fashion-plates, and if they have any value in the future, it will be as fashion-plates and not as paintings," so said modest Millais.

With my pencil I have now and then tilted at folly as it flies, and perhaps, once or twice, I can claim to have gained a modest victory. It was I who, in the eighties, caricatured the "black leg" in portraits of young girls in picture shows so unmercifully that the epidemic of black legs was seriously taken in hand and eventually stopped, though even now we have indications of it breaking out from time to time.

William Quiller Orchardson's palette had, perhaps, been utilized to more delightful purpose than that of any other painter's in the Academy. He may be said to have been the Pinero of painters; or it might be more correct to say that Pinero is the Orchardson of the stage. For I think "Un Mariage de Convenance," "Un Mariage de Convenance—After," "The Rift within the Lute," etc., were painted before Sir Arthur Pinero's plays were produced. Anyway, they both proved themselves artistic masters of life's problems, and both display perfect technique; perhaps too artis-

tically deep to be properly understood by the bourgeois British public, but they are equally held in esteem by all lovers of honest, artistic workmanship.

Orchardson was not only a most delightful painter, but a man of fascinating personality. He was very much like his own work, delicate, artistic and technically much on the surface. There was nothing deep about Orchardson either in his manner of work or in himself. The last time I met him was just outside his studio in Portland Place; he was in a Bath chair in a very weak state of health, and as I was speaking to him a lady stopped to ask him about his health. She was a tall, graceful lady of fashion, wrapped in furs, for the day was bitterly cold, and Jack Frost had just tipped the top of her pretty nose with a touch of carmine. Orchardson, the courtier, however, declared she looked as charming as ever. When the lady passed on he informed me that he believed she had sat to him for her portrait, but who she was he could not recall. "Women are so different out of doors," he remarked, and he had probably never before seen this lady out of his studio.

No matter how charming out-of-door dress may be, or how kind the weather; no matter how delightful the surroundings and the company may be, there is something lost in being seen out of doors.

For look at a picture painted out of doors, as it stands on the easel with all the light and movement around, and then see the same picture in the studio, where there is nothing reflected in your eyes but that picture, and

WILLIAM QUILLER ORCHARDSON, R.A.

note the difference—it is amazing! One would hardly believe that so many delicate tones and subtleties existed on the canvas when it is seen out of doors. As it is with pictures, so it is with women. The prettiest women, the women dressed in the most perfect taste, and moving with the utmost grace, are only parts of a picture, and nature generally has the best of it. Statues in white marble stand out and tell against the shades of green, and hold their own against the colour, or the plants and flowers and the radiant sky; but in the old days when statues were tinted they became merely part of the landscape, and showed with no better effect than the Galateas in their gowns and bonnets. Nowadays we do not even tint those Venuses in marble that we place in our houses, and therefore they are never part of the picture; in fact, they are, in these days of electric light, rather objectionable. But the ladies in evening gowns, and surrounded by subdued tints of furniture and hangings and carpets, like a picture in a frame, are set off to the best advantage.

In weather that is too fine the woman finds the colour is "taken out of the dress" and the expression out of her face; if it be cold, well—no one can look her best in cold weather. The happy medium may come. But then the wind will blow, and the rain will threaten, and neither men nor women can look their best if expecting unpleasantness.

This is a most important point and I do not only refer to the weather. If a woman wants to look her best she must be at her happiest. She must be expecting

pleasure and appreciation and admiration. Not only the expression, but even the muscles of the face and its line are altered by the feeling and thoughts behind. And this is a further reason why a woman looks her best when surrounded by a company of actual or potential admirers. A friend of mine has a theory that women actually change their appearance permanently for the better by cultivating certain moods of joy and sadness, and certain mental gifts, so as to influence their habitual expression.

No painter understood this better than Orchardson. His most famous subject pictures were interiors, usually representing a spacious room with only one or two figures. The principal interest centred in the lady on the canvas, a graceful figure in white—in the dress of the day too—a woman of charm surrounded by her admirers. If any painter knew how to make the most of women in imaginative pictures, Orchardson did—whether having a tiff with her husband, who is standing by the fireplace in modern evening dress and still picturesque, or whether the lady is seated at her harp or playing the piano, she is all grace, refinement and naturalness.

My observation leads me to think that in real life a woman to whom music is a real delight and not an effort will look well when playing a musical instrument, if it be one the manipulation of which does not require an ungraceful attitude.

Perhaps a lady playing a harp is seen at her best. The grace of her movements, the frame of the harp,

the sympathy of the delicately toned notes, all combine to produce a pleasing effect. Yes, when a lady is playing a harp is when she looks her best, and I am surprised that, if for that reason alone, harp playing is not as general as it was in the Victorian days. Of course the harp is a very difficult instrument to play well. A woman does not want to torture the ears of those whose eyes she seeks to please.

Violin playing is very nearly graceful, but there are that twisted left arm and the painful acrobatic contortions of the left hand, to weigh against the grace of the right arm.

In the old days hunting and hawking were graceful sports for women, from the artistic point of view at any rate, even if they suggested cruelty and unfeminine characteristics. The picturesque three-cornered hat, the green jacket and long flowing habit, were once popular subjects with artists—nowadays, dear me! How changed it all is! All the picturesqueness is gone, and, although there is no prettier sight than a young girl following the hounds, her elder sisters are anything but at their best in hard bowler hats, the tight plain jacket and the short skimpy habit and riding astride—which is unsuited for and looks hideous in portraiture.

There was a portrait painter I knew whose sister, a middle-aged rich woman, came the first day wearing a wonderful hat lavishly trimmed with real roses. This she wished to be painted. The hat was arranged on the table by her side. "Very well," said the artist,

"I had better paint the hat first, otherwise the flowers will be dead before I get to them." So the painting in of her own face and figure was postponed. When the painter was ready to start with the portrait she arrived with her maid and in a gorgeous evening gown. She had changed her mind and decided to be painted in that. The artist subsequently pointed out that she would not have her hat by her side when she was attired in evening dress, but she declined to have the flowers painted out. When the artist completed the portrait he turned the lady's hat into a bowl in which the flowers appeared quite naturally. But the sitter strongly objected. She must have the hat—she had worn it at a garden party the day previous to her first visit, and she insisted that it must be shown. There was nothing to do but repaint her gown back into a morning one, for which she sat quite happily. The portrait was sent home in due course with an account:

To altering dress £105.

George Boughton, R.A., differed from Orchardson: his excellent paintings of women were generally depicted in snow-covered surroundings, showing his graceful woman in quaint Dutch costume, in fur-trimmed costumes, or wraps. He is a clever painter who can make any modern woman look attractive—in England—in weather-proof attire.

It is essential for Englishwomen to study how to look well in wraps, oilskins and overalls. For the same damp climate that gives them their fresh, lovely,

ARTHUR HACKER, R.A.

healthy complexion—the envy of American and Continental women—has also its disadvantages, and the greatest of all is that it is never safe for long to be unprepared for a rainy day. It is certainly not so difficult for a woman nowadays to look well in overalls —" slip-ons " is, I believe, what the overcoats are called —as it was in our grandmothers' days, when huge crinolines were in vogue. She can have some tailor-made shapely substitute for a man's ulster, but the majority prefer " slip-on," shapeless and ugly. I venture to think that this abandonment of anything like a pleasing costume for bad weather is the result of motoring. I defy any woman to look—well, womanly, in her motor costume of a few years ago. The motor-cars made the prettiest girl look like an owl. Out of her motor she resembled nothing more than a sack of coal.

Arthur Hacker's—that delightful painter of pretty women—first palette, we are told, was not a complete one. When a school-boy, " surreptitiously acquiring some tubes of Winsor and Newton's paints, he omitted to purchase any white or any body colour "; pure primary colours proved, however, sufficient to inspire genius, and Winsor and Newton's could soon after be visited in broad daylight without any surreptitious feelings. His palette contained as strong bodies of paint as any held by the left thumb of any other painter in England. It is a pity that, in spite of Hacker's avowed admiration for Burlington House as a training ground, he escaped from its training—perhaps surreptitiously also—and stole over to Paris, as all the other clever

young artists have done; and it is the French and not the English training that brought up the young artist in the way he should paint. It was not only French professors who taught him his technique, but French peasants who furnished him with the subject of his first Academy picture. Like Stanhope Forbes, Solomon K. J. Solomon, and La Thangue, Hacker threw French art-teaching at the heads of our English Academicians, and was at once heralded as one of this magic circle! Hacker's palette was thoroughly French, undoubtedly clever and versatile. Whether set for portraiture or parables, it was always as charming in colour as his pencil is correct in drawing, and therefore his portraits of women are delightful.

Marcus Stone may be said to have been the painter, *facile princeps*, of the "Matinée Hat." Fortunately it is only paint, so that it cannot obstruct. A charming hat it is too, without which no Exhibition of the Academy was complete. The hat may one year have been called "Married for Love," or "An Offer of Marriage," or "A Honeymoon"; another it may be "In Love," or "A Passing Cloud," or "The First Love-letter"; but it was the Royal Academy Matinée Hat all the same. I have often taken it off in caricatures, so I ought to know. It would be too much to suggest, I suppose, if I may be pardoned for the pun, that h'attitude of the palette I here show suggests it also.

Ridicule scotched, if it did not absolutely kill, the "Matinée Hat." Actor-managers some years ago protested and to a certain extent succeeded. I cannot,

MARCUS STONE, R.A.

however, make this statement as the result of my own observation. For this would rather lead me to assert that the "Matinée Hat" is more *en évidence*, and far more obstructive, than hitherto; but my experience has, perhaps, been unfortunate, and gained under circumstances that seem to warrant the opinion that the actor-managers' friends are the greatest obstructionists.

The only matinées I go to are "professional" entertainments—performances given to the actors themselves. The theatre is generally two-thirds full of paper friends and members of the theatrical profession, and it is on what I see—and am not allowed to see on these occasions—that I base the above remarks.

Strange to say, what a leading paper called "a novelty" was introduced at a matinée at His Majesty's some years ago. On the programme was printed the polite hope that "Ladies wearing large hats will consent to remove them during the performance." I say "strange," for it was only a few days previously that I was present at the interesting matinée at His Majesty's Theatre, given by the pupils of Tree's Dramatic School, and of course found the theatrical ladies *en évidence* all over the theatre, and, equally of course, the most outrageous of hats obstructing the view from every point.

I hit upon a novel way of appealing to their wearers. I selected the most aggressive and obstructive hat, two or three rows of stalls in front of where I was seated, and having scribbled a sketch of it—something like the one facing the next page—I gave it to an attendant and saw it safely handed to the lady with the largest hat. The

sketch (from whom she did not know) was passed right and left, and like magic, without the ladies even looking round, graceful arms arose, in silhouette, and not one but many hats were removed simultaneously.

The theatre-hat nuisance in America is far worse than in England; for the obstructive headgear is worn in the evenings at every performance, and I should like to see the manager who would dare to ask for its removal! The "Matinée Hat" in America is a matinée hat: that is, it is worn in theatres, at lecture entertainments, and at theatrical performances in the morning, before lunch, not, as here, at afternoon performances which are not matinées at all. In the States the ladies themselves monopolize the seats at these morning entertainments. The men are too busy with their dollars. So that they only obstruct each other's view, or it may be they go to theatres and other amusements to criticize each other's hats, and not to see any performance on the stage.

E. J. Gregory, R.A., a genius of the first water, painted real women—not dolls—with a masterly hand. His best-known picture perhaps, "Boulter's Lock," is but one of many paintings of our pretty women on the river.

Punting on the river gives a skilful young lady with a good figure a rare chance of looking her best, so far as this is possible when seen out of doors. In fact, our rivers, particularly dear old Father Thames in his holiday reaches, are places in which one finds gentlewomen at their best. There is no prettier sight in

Pity us! This is all we can see of the stage.

the world than Henley Regatta. I have travelled much and seen many wonderful pictures of life; but, for seeing women at their best, Henley is the prettiest of all such scenes. Billiards—if women only realized the fact, and played more—shows them off to great advantage, and skating on ice—those who can do it with art and make graceful figures, where one is not wrapped up and frost-bitten—lends itself to showing off the graces; but the river, as Gregory proved, is their best background for portraits.

At one time a French painter—Tissot—exhibited regularly in the Royal Academy the prettiest and most audacious Victorian women possible. He painted chic Parisians as Englishwomen with much daring in dress and pose, nothing to what women—quite respectable ladies—dare nowadays, but they horrified Mrs. Grundy in the seventies. Later on, he abandoned these bewitching women and devoted himself to painting a series of pictures depicting the Life of Christ.

CHAPTER X

SOMETHING ABOUT DRESS

MODERN comedy has much to do with the increased interest in ladies' dress. In the old days of severe, mid-Victorian fashion, there was no chance for the Court dressmaker. Even the *premières danseuses*, in their long, straight-cut, ballet dresses, and with flattened hair over their temples, looked more like governesses out for a holiday than dancers on the stage. The present generation can verify the truth of what I say by a glance at the old engravings of the Sisters Elsner and the singers, Erisci and Malibran. But modern comedy, even musical farce of to-day, makes much of modern dress. Special articles, published in advance of the production of the piece, whet one's curiosity to see the fashion, and of those who make a rush to the stalls a large proportion are more interested in dress than in dramatists.

I recollect being present at a brilliant first night of a new Society Comedy, a great play of a leading dramatist. Every one who is everywhere on first nights filled the theatre, by right or by favour, and few seats were rescued by the paying public. In front of me sat two ladies, in no way frequenters of first-night shows, evidently ordinary members of the public, in fact I overheard them

congratulating each other on their luck in obtaining seats. They chatted during the first act, much to the annoyance of those seated around them, but when the ball-room scene came, in which the ladies on the stage were attired in the most bewitching of latest Parisian modes, the two ladies were deeply interested at once. The scene over, they departed, discussing the gowns they had just seen. Even in theatres men are not impressed by the gowns worn by the pretty actresses. They are fascinated by the pretty face, or pleasant manner, or the voice, by the *tout ensemble*, perhaps, but not by the mere success of the gown worn.

Men admire in dress precisely what they admire in character—simplicity, grace and femininity; and surely that applies to women of the Victorian era.

The present generation look upon the women's dress of the Victorian era both in their mothers' and grandmothers' time with derision and the crinoline as an abortion. In this, young people are absolutely wrong, for there is one thing to be said of the much-ridiculed crinoline that cannot be applied to women of to-day. A lady looked and moved with dignity as a lady should when she wore a crinoline, but the commoner women did not, thus showing the different class of wearers very distinctly.

When I illustrated a reissue of the works of Charles Dickens, I had lent me some genuine Victorian dresses of the Victorian era, which had been handed down to some aristocratic friends of mine. My models who wore these were tall, graceful girls and looked real duchesses

in their crinolines and full-skirted gowns; but, when they donned their own modern attire, they might have been shopgirls or any one else—their distinction had vanished.

The tailor-made costume of a later period, to a certain extent, preserved this distinction. The old dressmakers' occupation had gone—like the crinoline; and now we have fashionable women in business themselves, designing "creations," which in the Victorian days were designed by theatrical costumiers for the stage.

Ladies in those days were content to have their gowns made by a modest English dressmaker in a modest little private dwelling, Parisian coloured fashion-plates, a year or two out of date in the front parlour window, being the only sign of the work within. We are going back to that and to crinolines, to dresses made by women and to books written by men.

What *am* I to say of the dress of latter days? Is it indelicate? Well, to my mind it is suggestive—and suggestiveness is worse than indecency. I am anything but prudish, yet I have been shocked to see women of refinement and social position ape the *demi-monde*. During the War and for a year or so afterwards the scanty skirts, the bare backs and chorus-girl theatrical attire of our girls and children were—and still are—shocking, and quite out of place off the stage of variety shows or burlesques. That it is also appallingly risky is proved by the crowded Divorce Court list. Added to this, the free-and-easy manner and customs of the present-day girls, to say nothing of their position of

FROM CRINOLINE TO TAILOR-MADE

equality with men, make the subject of dress one dangerous to dwell upon. We are living in a time of revolutions, but the revolution in women's dress is by far the most startling. Self-respect is the only means of fighting the vulgar, selfish grabber. Our women, however, in their dress have abandoned self-respect and are therefore a ready prey for the brute.

I suppose that it may be generally accepted as an admitted fact, that women dress more to please other women than to please men. Probably a few dress in a way to please themselves; and it may be said that, provided the latter and smaller class are neither eccentric nor faddists, it is they who best succeed in pleasing both men and women.

Young men are too conceited over their own appearance to bother about the dress of women; the middle-aged man, except those who live to make a splash in Society, or purely for outside impression, prefers the wife who does not dress overmuch, his idea being that the best-dressed women are those whose dress one never notices at all; and old men have passed the days of observing such matters altogether. But, on the other hand, women—young, middle-aged and old—admire, emulate, criticize or ridicule other women's dresses. Of course by dress I mean everything, from the feather in the hat to the tip of the shoe.

Not one man in a thousand can tell the dear ladies if they have worn a heliotrope evening gown at Lady Spanker's ball, a fortnight ago, or if that hat, which looked so charming at Ranelagh last Saturday, was the same worn

while on the box seat of Sir Reginald Hilltop's coach at the meet in Hyde Park the week previous. In fact, I venture to say that, after any Society function, were all the men who had been present put through an examination as to the dresses they had seen worn, not one in five hundred could give you the vaguest idea of any, not even whether Mrs. De Lisle was dressed in black or white, in green or yellow, or whether Lady Springdale wore red or yellow.

What Victorian men did notice and comment upon was any incongruity of costume, particularly in the hunting field or at other sports, but worse still in emblematic costume. The man who travels—and most Englishmen are globe-trotters—by degrees learns much of the customs and the emblems which creep into the design in costume, or have grown to be implied by the way in which costume is worn; and it makes him start, when at home, to find his sweet English sisters, cousins and aunts innocently adopting some trifling detail of the costume of Japanese or other ingenious peoples, so dreadful that it would be impossible even to explain to his fair friends the nature of their mistakes. Some of these improprieties of dress—if I may so call them—have been so long in common use that it would be hypercritical, if not positively ridiculous, to raise the question of incongruities; yet they are commented upon by men of the world and laughed at by cynics.

There is one class of gentlewoman whose dress does attract the unfavourable attention of men, and it is just as well that such ladies should be made aware of it. I refer

to the fashionable mother with grown-up daughters, who, in order to make believe that she is still youthful, dresses herself in the most extravagant and expensive fashion, and her daughters dowdily—or perhaps I ought to say plainly—and in proportionately childlike style. There are, unfortunately, many such selfish women, their excuse being that young girls only require the very plainest attire. That may be true, if the plainest is of the best; but I have in mind those mothers who deliberately dress their daughters badly to make themselves more attractive. Juvenility is often their object, and in those Victorian days when an English satirist of the pencil made fair game of ladies' dresses, John Leech, who was always excellent and persistent in poking fun at fashion, was extremely scathing in dealing with the would-be young mother—young at the expense of her growing daughters.

In my opinion nothing becomes the young girl better than a white frock and black hat and feather, unless, perhaps, neutral tints—greys and greens. Conflicting colours in a young girl's attire are artistically objectionable. Artificialism ought to be avoided, and affectation, such as jewellery, bangles, chatelaines, chains and watches, cannot be too severely condemned.

Simplicity in dress is the hall-mark of the aristocrat, elaboration and over-dressing that of the *nouveaux riches;* theatrical dress is adopted by the vulgar, and dowdiness by the stupid; eccentricity (no hats or shoes) by the foolish and ugly, and boyish get-up by the fast and bourgeois.

If simplicity in adult dress is advisable, it is ten times

more so in that of children. The child whose costume is ugly, gaudy, or bizarre is being trained in bad taste, unfitted to appreciate the higher forms of art, or to make a good appearance in society later on; to say nothing of the cultivation of vanity and extravagance. The child who is cumbered and loaded with unsuitable garments whose weight, shape, or perishable nature cramp its movements, or compel constant restraints and scoldings, is being injured and stunted in body and mind. But, apart from all this, a lack of simplicity in children's clothes is an advertisement of the bad taste of their parents.

No woman is to be blamed for wishing to set off the beauty of her children or to look charming and pretty (but simplicity can be charming and pretty), but to dress up a child in the garb of a woman or a music-hall singer, or an inmate of a prison, or an escaped lunatic, or of professional racing men and touts, can never be anything but objectionable.

Writing as a caricaturist and in its broadest interpretation, I fear that, judging by experience, the majority of women do not appreciate caricature. They are, however, interested more or less in the caricature of fashion, particularly of the dress of the Victorians. Dress is a serious matter and should be safeguarded. To make fun of fashion is regarded as an outrage of good taste. In the days of the crinoline, John Leech in *Punch* amused men but annoyed women; Du Maurier was strictly speaking not a caricaturist but a satirist, his statuesque women were his foils for his humour or satire—they were not women of flesh and blood, but merely models for the

correct dress of Society of his day shown off to the best advantage. Therefore most of his *Punch* work was merely glorified fashion-plates. In America they were the only drawings in *Punch* the women appreciated, and in *Harper's Magazine* he provided the same somewhat laboured and clever satire under drawings of English fashion-plates, and so it has been in a lesser degree with all artists drawing social subjects.

When that American lady, Mrs. Amelia Bloomer, startled the world in the early Victorian days, making herself ridiculous and her name immortal, she, in the fashion of that day of orthodoxy in everything connected with dress, art, furniture and decoration, adopted in it everything that was hideous, from her wide, flat, flopping hat tied under the chin to her wide, flat, heelless white boots with square black toecaps.

The whole crusade against Mrs. Bloomer appears absurd to-day. It was only equalled by the demonstration against the ankle skirt in 1911, a skirt by the way which I invented—but that does not come into the Victorian era—when women in place of being jeered at and pelted by hooligans for modestly uncovering their lower limbs in sensible divided skirts—wear practically no skirts at all! or skirts of such scantiness that they merely attract attention to their shapely legs and pretty feet.

I merely introduced the subject as a matter of curious history connected with women.

I should like to correct one of my contentions—I seem to have held at the time—that women in England

had not pretty feet. As if to disprove it—have they not of late years lost no opportunity of proving the contrary?

My friend the *Pelican* wrote apropos of this:

"Mr. Harry Furniss says English women will not wear the ankle skirt because of the size of their feet. Bootmakers, on the other hand, declare that the excessive size of the English foot is nothing but a myth."

"The British, for many a year,
Has served the comic bard,
But satire's dead; it's very clear
Three feet don't make a yard."

CHAPTER XI

SOME HOSTESSES

SOCIETY owes far more to clever women than to clever men. The gatherings of wits, worthies, courtiers and beauties that are epoch-making have always been those designed and presided over by the clever hostess. From the days of Cleopatra to those of Madame Récamier; of the famous Duchess of Gordon to those of Lady Jeune.

The pathetic history of the beautiful Countess of Blessington—the most famous hostess in the early part of the Victorian era—is the familiar story of many idols of Society.

The lion-hunters themselves often have to endure the same vicissitudes of fortune and the same sufferings as they themselves inflict on others, and are treated by fickle Society as toys to be thrown on one side when the paint of popularity is ever so slightly rubbed off. Lady Blessington was a woman of whom it has been written: "Her life was passed in the society of the most eminent in intellect and rank; her beauty, her taste, and her fascinating manners have been the theme of a hundred writers, and the talk of Europe." Yet she was sold up, in Kensington Gore, existed by writing, and died far

away from her satellites and time-servers in a foreign country.

"Yet on the haunted canvas dwells
The beauty of that face,
Which art's departed master held,
His sweetest task to trace;
None see it, but are prisoners held
In its strong toil of grace.

"Nature, thy fairy godmother,
Has lavished, for thy part,
A prodigality of gifts
To make thee what thou art—
The lovely face, the gifted mind,
The kind and generous heart."

Lady St. Helier, as Lady Jeune, was known for years all the world over as the most enterprising hostess in London. The fact that this accomplished lady is clever and original is sufficient reason why the hundred Lady Boredoms of conventionality should sneer at her hospitality.

I have been a diner-out for years; I have dined with delightful people all over the kingdom—in America, Canada, Australia, on the Continent, and in many places all over the world, but I may sincerely confess that, for good company, no dinners approach those given by Lady Jeune. Some may consider it a gross breach of etiquette to mention, in print, private parties such as these; but, if that is so, no autobiography ever written with due regard to etiquette would be worth reading. For public men and women who meet at dinner are still public men and women.

Although Lady St. Helier has written a fascinating

LADY JEUNE

book of reminiscences, she can hardly be bracketed with authoresses. She has, however, brought together Art, Literature and the Drama and has been the best of friends to Bohemians.

Lady St. Helier sums up the qualifications necessary for a successful hostess briefly as follows:

"The real success of a dinner, however, must always rest on the hostess; she is the presiding genius of the feast, and on her tact, cleverness and discretion must its fortunes depend. The secret of being a good hostess lies very much in a woman's thoroughly enjoying society. If she is happy and amused, her satisfaction spreads to her guests, and the whole party is inspired by her condition of mind. A nervous woman, or one who does not really enjoy society, never makes her dinner as pleasant, for she is continually haunted by the thought that something will go wrong, or she is tired and bored, and her moods equally react on her surroundings. Nothing is more infectious than pleasure or *ennui*, and a hostess in either frame of mind makes or mars her party."

How true that is! I have been present at many dinners beautifully arranged and with excellent company, but in consequence of their being presided over by a dull hostess, unable to set the ball of conversation rolling, they have been about as cheery as Quaker meetings. "Distinguished" people are not always brilliant conversationalists, and even Lady Jeune admits that the company may be over-weighted with intellect:

"I have a very vivid recollection of a dinner composed

of people each of whom was distinguished in every sense of the word. A Prime Minister, two Cabinet Ministers, a distinguished soldier, one of the greatest ecclesiastics of the day, a brilliant scientific man, a great journalist, a distinguished lawyer, added to several agreeable and pretty women, made up a dinner which at first sight seemed to promise a rare feast of intellectual delight, but which one of the guests declared was the dullest dinner he had ever sat down to."

In fact she confesses that it is always a mistake to compose a dinner-party entirely of brilliant people. Now, therefore, I understand how it is I have been so often invited.

From among the hundreds of press notices of dinners at which I have been a guest, I select the following few examples of how the weekly press describes those at Lady Jeune's.

If her husband's life work as President of the Divorce Court consisted of separating people, Lady Jeune's would seem to be that of bringing them together.

" Lady Jeune is the one hostess in London upon whom the mantle of Madame Mohl has really fallen. There is many another hospitable house, many another charming circle, but to her belongs especially the power that created the *salon* of old time, the indescribable combination of faultless tact and *bonhomie* that draws together everybody worth knowing, albeit of the most varied (and sometimes mutually hostile) species, in general congeniality. Lady Jeune entertains simultaneously all sorts and conditions of distinguished people with a fine impartiality, and with-

out the least incongruity, the result being that her parties are quite the pleasantest imaginable. A recent entertainment in particular, after a dinner attended by T.R.H. Prince and Princess Christian, Princesses Victoria and Louise of Schleswig-Holstein, the Duke and Duchess of St. Albans, Lord Houghton, the Lord Chancellor of Ireland, and Mr. Harry Furniss, was not merely brilliant but most thoroughly enjoyable. The beautiful saloons, radiant with wax lights, with their polished floors and delicate Louis Seize furniture, were filled with notabilities of every kind, and an incessant but not loud confusion of tongues formed a grateful substitute for music—that murderer of comfortable conversation."

In another I read, "It is no exaggeration to say that Lady Jeune is perhaps the most popular hostess in London. At her house in Wimpole Street you meet literally every one.

"Only the other day she dined four royalties, three peers, one peeress, and Mr. Harry Furniss. After dinner her beautiful rooms were filled with some of the greatest folk in England. It was remarked that if by any chance her house caught fire, and her guests had been burned, half the most famous names would have disappeared from the peerage. The Royal Academy would have been decimated. The theatres would have been obliged to close. The most eloquent pulpits would have beeen dumb. Science would have been at a standstill. If you look down the list of guests who were at that famous gathering you will know that this language is not so tall as it seems."

These notices give the private dinner a public flavour in language not so "tall" as we should find in the American press, but still I may emulate that quaint American artist, James McNeill Whistler, who, when a lady said to him, "There have been only two artists in the world, Velazquez and Mr. Whistler," replied, "Y——s, madam, but why drag in Velazquez?" and be pardoned if I ask, why drag in royalties, peers and peeresses?

And turn to another Society public announcement:

"There is certainly no hostess in London who has the same cleverness in making up incongruous and interesting dinner-parties as Lady Jeune. Her house in Wimpole Street will certainly obtain a foremost place in all the memoirs of the day. A night or two ago, for instance, her dinner party was composed as follows:

"Mr. Henry Irving, Miss Rehan, of 'Taming the Shrew' celebrity, the American Minister, Miss Terry, Mr. Phelps, Lady Pembroke, Lord and Lady R. Churchill, Mr. and Mrs. Grossmith, Mr. Guy Dawnay, Mr. Furniss, and Mr. Hamilton Aïdé. It would be difficult to conceive a more amusing conglomeration, and the party was as great a success as it deserved to be."

The Society paragraphist, I see, predicts that Lady Jeune's house will be mentioned in all memoirs of the day. It would be ridiculous to bracket my chatter and caricatures with "Memoirs." These pages are merely the "Confessions of a Caricaturist," and I do not for a moment expect them to be taken seriously. The Countess

Lady St. Helier

of Conventionality may—should she come across these notes—wonder at Lady Clever's eccentricity, and possibly Lady Sneerwell may recall the old story invented at the expense of Lady Clever, describing an officer in Africa, fighting in the bush, coming across a huge gorilla. He raises his pistol, when suddenly he recognizes the gorilla and says, "Pardon me, but surely we have met before—I know your face—let me see? Yes, I recollect, we met in London at dinner at Lady Clever's."

Well, Lady Jeune, the Lady Clever of London, has claimed me many a time as a member of menagerie, and I have received her invitations as a compliment—and enjoyed her dinners far more than any others I have been asked to, and not less on account of their being, to a certain extent, semi-public. Take this particular evening referred to in the paragraph just quoted—not by any means the most unique or interesting gathering I have enjoyed in Wimpole Street. It was on that occasion I had a chance of studying one of the most extraordinary men of our time, Lord Randolph Churchill, in an environment in which I had never before seen him—in the society of women, instead of men. At men's dinners I had found that puzzling personality the life and soul, and I may add the egotist, of the party, Mr. Gladstone not excepted. Here, with two of the most accomplished actresses of the day, Miss Terry, the leading actress of England, on his right, and Miss Rehan, the leading actress of America, on his left, our incomparably clever hostess one place removed from him, and his charming wife—whom I sat next to—facing him, he

never spoke to one of them! The only time he spoke during dinner was to ask me some questions about Parliament, where I had remained that evening some time after he had left. I thought he was, that evening, the rudest man I had ever come across, and his wife one of the most charming women.

I ought to mention Lady Jeune's artistic taste in table decoration. I recollect being seated next to her at the table of a politician noted for his orchids, where one of the prettiest tables I have ever seen was covered with beautiful orchids of a mauve tint, peeping out of baskets tied with ribbons of the same colour, the electric light, also mauve, lending a beautifully harmonious tone to the whole. She admired the table immensely, but on the following evening I dined at the house of Lady Jeune, and there almost everything was pure white. Only snowdrops, placed in pure white ornaments with just a little scarlet in the centre as a relief, graced the table, and the effect was exquisitely pretty and simple.

As Lady Jeune observed in an article on Dinners and Diners contributed to the *North American Review* a few years ago:

"The old saying as regards giving dinners in London, 'Cutlet for Cutlet,' has fortunately long ceased to be true; no one is invited to dinner only because a dinner is expected in return. People are invited for every reason but that, and it is in the mixture and variety we meet at a dinner table that the secret of its success rests."

Yet I have read somewhere—was it in the same article? —a contradiction of this, to the effect that every one ought to give dinner for dinner.

"A really pleasant dinner-party, we are told, ought never to be a very large one, but the rapidly increasing size of London Society almost entirely precludes people who entertain a great deal of enjoying the pleasure of a small one. The golden rule of hospitality should be always to return the civility of others, and one should not dine at the house of any person whom one does not intend to invite in return. However strictly people may adhere to this rule, the size of Society makes dinners, as well as all other forms of entertainment, large, and the number of guests is generally limited only by the size of the dining-room. The traditionally ideal dinner, which ought to consist of eight or ten people, well known to one another and all good talkers, at a round table, so that the conversation may be general, has become a dream of the past; and in its place we have the large dinner of to-day, at which general conversation is out of the question, and where one is limited to the society of one's next-door neighbours."

Certainly the Lion of the day ought not to be, and is not, expected to "invite in return" the person at whose house he, or she, has dined. His presence at the dinner is return enough, both from the point of view of the worker who spares time to make himself agreeable and entertaining at a Society function, and from that of the Lady Lion Hunter, whoever she may be. Even the formality of "return calls" is rightly regarded as super-

fluous in the case of the busy professional men or women who have been entertained, and entertaining, at dinner; and were it not so they would be precluded from accepting hospitality; for otherwise their time would all be taken up in doing "social duties" and neglecting the very work for which they are honoured.

Cards of invitation are sometimes original. One celebrated hostess I know always sends a list of her guests I am to meet, with a not too carefully written biographical notice of any new guest I am not acquainted with. Her frank descriptions are entertaining, if occasionally perhaps bordering on the libellous; but what if she wrongly directed them! It is certainly better to know too much of those you meet than too little. Since I began this book I have been to a large dinner in the private house of a well-known millionaire. After dinner two guests, Americans, asked me what their host was; and not one knew anything of the other. It was a magnificent dinner, but it might have been served to each guest in a separate room for all the entertainment afforded apart from the eating.

Over a hundred years ago, in several fashionable houses, in Paris, a new arrangement was introduced so as to avoid a dinner falling flat for similar reasons. The ladies first took their places, leaving intervals for the gentlemen; after being seated, each was desired to call in a gentleman to sit beside her; and in this way the hostess was relieved from all embarrassment of etiquette as to rank and pretensions. "But," continues the chronicler, "without doubt, this method had its incon-

veniences. It may happen that a bashful beauty dare not name the object of her secret wishes, and an acute observer may determine, from a single glance, that the elected is not the chosen."

The most extraordinary invitation I ever came across was the following, from the land of the Leek; an amusing specimen of a Welsh card of invitation:

Llandiller Castle.

"Mr. Walter Norton, and Mrs. Walter Norton and Miss Sandys' compliments to Mr. Charles Morgan, Mrs. Charles Morgan and Miss Charles Morgan and the Governess (whose name Mr. Walter Norton, Mrs. Walter Norton and Miss Sandys do not recollect), and Mr. Walter Norton, Mrs. Walter Norton and Miss Sandys request the favour of the company of Mr. Charles Morgan, Mrs. Charles Morgan and Miss Charles Morgan and the Governess (whose name Mr. Walter Norton, Mrs. Walter Norton and Miss Sandys do not recollect) to dinner on Monday next week. Mr. Walter Norton, Mrs. Walter Norton and Miss Sandys beg to inform Mr. Charles Morgan, Mrs. Charles Morgan and Miss Charles Morgan and the Governess (whose name Mr. Walter Norton, Mrs. Walter Norton and Miss Sandys do not recollect) that Mr. Walter Norton, Mrs. Walter Norton and Miss Sandys can accommodate Mr. Charles Morgan, Mrs. Charles Morgan and Miss Charles Morgan and the Governess (whose name Mr. Walter Norton, Mrs. Walter Norton and Miss Sandys do not recollect) with beds, if remaining the night is agreeable

to Mr. Charles Morgan, Mrs. Charles Morgan and Miss Charles Morgan and the Governess (whose name Mr. Walter Norton, Mrs. Walter Norton and Miss Sandys do not recollect)."

It would be superfluous and well-nigh impossible to deal with the host of charming hostesses in London in the Victorian era. The political gatherings alone, such as those presided over by the late Duchess of Devonshire, would supply material for many articles of greater length than this chapter.

Lady Aberdeen, however, must be mentioned in this connection, for she is more than a political hostess. She brings together interesting persons with the same success as Lady Jeune. When the Earl of Aberdeen was Governor-General of Canada, Government House at Ottawa was the scene of many a charming dinner, and the name of Lady Aberdeen will ever be remembered in the Dominion as the most delightful hostess that ever presided over it.

Apropos of the Aberdeens I must relate a curious adventure of my own as a draughtsman. When I was on tour in Canada, appearing in the Opera House in Ottawa, I was "commanded" to dine at Government House. I had been filling my sketch-book with character-sketches and drawings of persons and places that would serve as pictorial notes of my travels. Among these was the sketch of a fine young fellow in fur cap and generally correct Canadian costume, whom I had drawn as a type of Young Canada. But at the dinner in question I recognized this very man in the person of a footman who

The Countess of Aberdeen

spoke in broad Scotch; and I was afterwards informed by Lady Aberdeen that she brought over all her Scotch servants with her.

I believe I have made public before the fact that the result of dining with the Aberdeens in Canada gave Sir J. M. Barrie the idea for his successful play, *The Admirable Crichton*.

On my return from my American tour I was having lunch at the Garrick Club when Barrie sat down at the same small table, and in chatting over my visit to Canada I mentioned the curious innovation the Aberdeens had introduced into Government House. Once a week they changed places with the servants, and they and their staff—so I was informed by their aide-de-camp—waited upon their domestics at dinner.

As if one more germ of an idea had penetrated into his well-stocked brain, Barrie's massive head slightly oscillated, but, as he is not demonstrative, he said nothing.

A few days afterwards I received a note suggesting we should meet again, which we did. The result was *The Admirable Crichton*, and many thousands of pounds into the pockets of the delightful author. I paid for my own lunch. I should not have referred to this interesting fact again, but that the *Daily Mail*, not long ago, printed the following as being something new and novel:

"One well-known hostess has gone to the extent of changing places once in the winter with her servants, whom she recently entertained to a ball. At a dinner the other day Miss Andreae, a popular lady in the

younger 'set,' assisted her own butler by donning the dress of a waitress and serving the guests at her parents' table."

So the novelty originated with the Aberdeens was transferred by my means to Barrie, was adopted from Barrie's play by a popular lady hostess in America, and thence arrived in the *Daily Mail* as a striking "novelty."

Sir Robert Hunter was a very versatile and well-known man. He had for years worked indefatigably to preserve open spaces for the people. I first met him at the opening of Parliament Fields at Highgate. He filled the important post of solicitor to the Post Office for many years, too many, I fear, as his agreement to remain after his official time had expired, in order to help the Government with important postal developments, shortened his valuable life. Lady Hunter is a very accomplished and beautiful woman, and a charming hostess. Not of the Society tittle-tattle order but the very opposite. Most of the clever men and women of advanced ideas have at times formed her house-party; profound professors, both men and women, scientists, politicians, travellers and writers, as guests. It was then she was in her element, for she has not only the tact combined with personal charm necessary for a successful hostess, but the profound knowledge which draws them out. It might be added that I, in a way, acted as the jester between the courses of high mental hotch-potch.

This suggests to my mind Sir Frederick Pollock, who sits up to write on the subject of law. He is a

literary lawyer of the highest order, and more chock-full of legal knowledge, in its historical aspect, than all the rest of the Bench and the Bar put together. I only infer that he writes at night from an incident that once happened in the country house to which I have just referred. He and I were guests; just before midnight he rose from his seat among us in the library, presumably to retire to rest; and, going to the book-shelves, he rather astonished me, if not his host, who knows him better than I do, by selecting a dozen or more volumes.

"A little 'light' reading before going to sleep," I said, and, as he was leaving the room, I asked him if he thought he could get through that small library he was taking up in his arms before the breakfast bell rang in the morning. This direct question, coming from an ordinary individual like myself, so nonplussed Sir Frederick that he dropped the books one by one and retired backwards, to chew the cud of his own well-stocked brain, and perhaps to produce the cream of his already well-assimilated knowledge in literary form.

Mrs. Arthur Lewis was at one time the Queen of Bohemia, and at the beautiful house, Moray Lodge, Campden Hill, the Lewises entertained artists, actors, *litterateurs*, wits and professors right royally. Arthur Lewis owed something to that section of society by depriving the stage of their bright particular star—Kate Terry. He was Lewis of the firm Lewis and Allenby, but outside his Regent Street business he was an artist of more than ordinary merit and, what is more to the

point, an art connoisseur. Everybody who was anybody's friend gathered under his festive roof and came under the influence of his charming wife. Moray Lodge became the play-room for the celebrated children of Bohemia. Grown-ups, clever and celebrated they might be, but still children by nature. The "Moray Minstrels" were one of the great attractions, consisting of twenty-five part-singing performers.

Du Maurier never ceased talking of those happy days—of the delightful glee-singing and of his share in entertaining Mrs. Lewis's guests. It was at Moray Lodge, just for a bit of fun, Burnand wrote *Cox and Box*, a parody of the Maddison Morton's well-known farce *Box and Cox*, in which Sir Arthur Sullivan (then young Mr. Sullivan) and Arthur Cecil both took parts. This happened before my time. When I was first invited to Moray Lodge I recollect a capital performance in which every part was undertaken by a member of the Terry family—including Ellen Terry and Fred.

One of the brightest and most amusing women I ever met was Mrs. F., the youngest and favourite daughter of one of the brightest and most amusing men of the Victorian era—the celebrated Alexander Russell, editor of the *Scotsman*. "Russell of the *Scotsman*" became a power in journalism. He had a fluent pen, a keen wit and a wonderful personality, and was, perhaps, one of the most popular public men Edinburgh has produced. There he shone, for he never deserted "the Modern Athens"; although in his day the city no longer remained the centre of learning, and aspirants to fame were going

South without a return ticket in their pockets. Russell I never knew, he was before my time, but I have had the pleasure of his daughter's acquaintance for many years and enjoyed through her much of the wit of her distinguished father. Mrs. F., whose husband was editor and proprietor of a very influential paper in the north of Ireland, sold it, and came to London, where they settled, became a leading hostess in better-class Bohemia. The stage and literature forgathered at her house. Irving and Toole, Burnand and Yates, everybody who was anybody spent Sunday afternoons with the F.s and, needless to say, a large sprinkling of the " wits " came from over the border.

Mentioning Irving and Toole reminds me of a very funny incident the F.s told me of. These two leading actors and great friends had supped with the F.s " not wisely but too well," and left together in the early hours of the morning. It was a bright night, and as the F.s closed the windows they saw down the street silhouetted against the light of the moon the two figures arm in arm, Irving had got Toole's overcoat and Toole Irving's, so that the picture can easily be imagined. It was not readily forgotten.

As I said, I never knew Alexander Russell, but I have heard many good stories of him. One has reference to his originality in editing. There happened to be in his time in Edinburgh a large linendraper's establishment, or something of the kind, owned by one MacLaren, the father of the MacLarens who were well-known Members of Parliament. Old MacLaren was an irrepressible

correspondent to the *Scotsman* in all principal affairs, and once sent an extra long screed to Russell. Russell published it in full, and in an editorial footnote replied in the following brief fashion:

(I thought I would give him rope enough.—EDITOR.)

CHAPTER XII

SOME BAD WOMEN

I DO not think bad women were more numerous or that vice was more rampant in the Victorian days than now; vice was certainly less disguised, perhaps more blatant, and consequently more criticized. It was the time of Exeter Hall, of Stiggins, Chadband and Co., of goody-goody societies for the suppression of vice, of innumerable societies for the reformation of young women, of Moral Missions and Nosy Parker's sermons.

To-day we have no Cremorne Gardens, or Argyll Rooms, or Kitty Hamiltons, or music-hall promenades. The streets are morally cleaner and therefore vice is not so apparent. Exeter Hall has vanished, but Farm Street Chapel, Mayfair, in an up-to-date way fills its place. Father Vaughan in his wonderful outspoken sermons on the "Sins of Society" shows that a very different woman exists to the "prunes and prisms" of the modest Victorian lady.

Vice has gone indoors—that's all. I have no desire in these pages to follow and describe it, but I may say that the streets are morally cleaner by reason of modern Society women and those of the middle-classes

substituting and robbing the "bad" women outside of their means of existence.

Whatever the Victorians may have appeared outwardly compared with the present, they were morally no worse and certainly not so hypocritical.

So altered has the code of morality become that judges are charging juries of late with this fact and directing the jury to realize that women live a freer (and therefore a more immoral) life than those in the Victorian era. In criminal cases—such as a recent and notorious betting fraud in which a Society lady was defendant—this idea seems to have had effect. It is evident to all students of Criminology that we have as large a proportion of bad women as in the days of Good Queen Victoria, but regarded with an absurd leniency that would not have then been tolerated in spite of the fact that—as I shall presently point out—a pretty woman together with her charms and artfulness frequently blinded both judge and jury.

It is very difficult to give woman her proper place in crime. Statistics rather flatter her. The number of women tried, convicted and imprisoned is ridiculously small compared with men. Now that we have female suffrage this should be altered, for I take it as granted that as women vote, and vote themselves into positions of authority, from detectives to magistrates, statistics should of course show a more proportionate number of criminals in petticoats.

Serjeant Ballantine, a leading Victorian barrister, said he often wished that cases in which charges preferred

by women against the opposite sex could be disposed of by a jury of matrons; that men were not fit to withstand the wiles of woman in the cause of justice. "The tears of a good-looking girl efface arguments of counsel and the suggestion of reason," says the Serjeant. "However absurd and incredible the story may be, a fainting fit at an appropriate time removes from their minds all its improbabilities."

I fear, however, if women were solely a jury of matrons and the culprit a man, and a handsome one, he would have little chance of being punished. In the eighteenth century, a footpad of the name of John Hartley, an extremely handsome youth, and quite a favourite with women, was sentenced to death. A deputation of young ladies of position, dressed in white, actually went to St. James's Palace and petitioned the King to pardon Hartley. If he was pardoned, the petition stated, they were prepared to cast lots who should be his wife. The King declined to pardon John Hartley, saying that he thought hanging would be better for him than marriage.

If the police can arrest a man mixed up in any crime—short of murder—they are not anxious to arrest the woman. Magistrates are satisfied, if the man is punished, to be very lenient with the woman; if not, then the visiting justices are; failing them there is outside influence, and the sympathetic press. From beginning to end of a case the tendency is to punish the man and protect the woman. Statistics are deceiving, for if woman is not guilty, the man's crime is in many cases caused by her; his infatuation for her, jealousy,

devotion, revenge, he is merely a tool in her hands. Then, on the other hand, criminal records show that, against this, but for women a large proportion of culprits would never be discovered. The cleverest men in crime, men who work by themselves—like Peace and others—and trusting no man avoid detection, trust their secret to a woman and are caught. The detectives know the value of a suspect's lady friend. The first move is to discover who this may be; failing this, a tempting reward will quickly dissolve love, and if there has been another woman in the case, revenge will prompt measures to give him up. Any way we look at it, it is impossible, by the returns of arrests and convictions to give the correct proportion of male and female criminals living among us. Besides the points mentioned above, I ought not to omit the truism that women have a far greater insight into character than men and can detect disguises quicker. To illustrate their cleverness in detecting detectives, and also their revenge in assisting them, I cannot do better than mention the escape of the well-known convict, Punch Howard, a wonderful escape from Millbank in the Victorian days. So important was it to re-arrest this man, that a powerful and capable warder, as soon as he discovered the hiding-place of the escaped convict, started off to arrest him. But the culprit was in hiding with his friends in brickfields at West Drayton. The artful detective, as the warder was then, having disguised himself as a labourer with a spade over his shoulder, marched into an alehouse close by, which, as it was early in the morning, was deserted. A curious

middle-aged, one-eyed woman of anything but prepossessing appearance was serving at the bar. The clever London warder-detective was rather taken aback, as the following conversation, which I find in *Memorials of Millbank*, will show:

"Morrow, mistress. Any work going?"

"Ah, work enough," replied the woman, fixing him with her one eye, which was as good as four or five in any other head. "But you don't want no work."

"No?"

"No; I know you. You're not what you seem. That spade and them duds ain't no sort of good. You're after work, but not that sort of work."

Doubtful whether she meant to help or thwart him, the detective could only trust himself to order a pot of ale.

"Have a drain, missus?"

"And I'll help you too—no, not with ale, but to cop young Punch."

"Punch?"

"Ay—Punch Howard. That's the work you're after, and you shall get it too, or my name's not Martha Jones. This three-and-twenty years I've lived with his uncle, Dan Cockett, man and wife, though no parson blessed us. Three-and-twenty I slaved and bore with the mean, white-faced hound, and now he leaves me for a younger woman, and I'm brought to this. Help you! By the great powers, I'd put a knife in Dan Cockett too."

"And how am I to take him?"

"Not by daylight. Bless you, if you went into that

field they'd never let you out alive. Why, no bobby durst go there, nor yet a dozen together."

"Is Punch Howard in the field with them?"

"There; look yonder. D'ye see that lad in the striped shirt and blue belcher tie, blue and big white spots? Can't you tell him a mile off?"

Sure enough it was Punch Howard standing by a brick "table" at which a number of others were at work, smoothing and finishing the bricks, or coming and going with the bearing-off barrows.

"Come to-night, master. They sleep mostly out there, on the top of the brick stacks—and heavy sleep, for the beer in this house isn't water. Come with a bobby or two, and look them all over. Punch'll be among them, and you'll be able to steal him away before the rest awake."

Punch was soon back in Millbank.

There is no work connected with crime more difficult than the detection of the wrong-doer; even the greatest experts are foiled.

Monsieur Claude, chief of the Paris Police in the Second Empire, gives a striking instance of how clever and quick-witted polished rogues can be. "There is many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip," is an old adage that should be written up in the office of every detective. Claude had it said to him when he was ordered to arrest an escaped prisoner who had been punished for pretending to be a broker, and had obtained large sums from the credulous and ignorant public.

"Take care," said the Government official to Claude.

"IN A MOMENT ALL THE BEAUTIES SURROUNDED CLAUDE"

"That rascal is very clever; he has as many tricks in his bag as a monkey. Don't sell your bear's grease before you have killed your bear!"

Now it is necessary to state that at that time Paris was mad over songs of Pierre Jean de Béranger. This old poet was little seen by his admirers, being opposed to public acclaim. His songs were sung everywhere, and his fame was at its height. I do not suppose the energetic Monsieur Claude, as he went off in search of his man, thought of the song-writer; his mind was concentrated upon catching the escaped prisoner, whom he had seen before. Single-handed, Claude penetrated into the haunts of vice, the dancing saloons in the lowest quarters. He thought it likely the convict he was in search of would be leading a merry life and he was right.

On entering the once famous Closerie des Lilas, he found his man surrounded by a swarm of pretty girls and bewitching *danseuses* of the Latin quarter. Claude walked straight up to the corner where the convict was, his eyes fixed on his prey.

The escaped prisoner saw him coming. He turned pale. Claude felt he was his!

He was just close enough to capture him when he saw the wily one turn his head and whisper something into the ear of one of his companions.

In a moment all the beauties surrounded Claude, hemming him in. They bowed to him, and embraced him, and threw bouquets of flowers over him. The music stopped, the dancers joined the throng, and with one voice called "Vive Béranger! Vive Béranger!"

Their delight at finding their song-writing hero in their midst intoxicated them, and poor Claude was powerless.

He was so embarrassed by their embraces and the flowers and compliments showered on him, that he could neither move nor speak, and the convict managed to escape before his clever trick was discovered.

There is yet one more point in my mentioning the effect a pretty woman has upon the judge and jury. Ballantine had great experience of their effect both in court and out of it, and he says after many years in criminal cases that he rarely knew a thoroughly innocent person convicted except when the accused is opposed by a pretty woman. Juries in many of these instances seem to bid adieu to common sense.

" In cases that might fairly be the subject of an action before a civil tribunal the juries take up a high moral tone, and think themselves justified in inflicting the punishment awarded to one of the highest of crimes. I could record many instances in which, I believe, there has been a lamentably wrong conclusion arrived at against the person charged. In one case that I was engaged in, and in which the jury would scarcely listen to me, they were persuaded by the earnest exhortations of the judge to acquit the prisoner, but they appended to their finding the hope that his lordship would see that he was severely punished."

The entertaining barrister then goes on to relate a case at the Central Criminal Court, in which a fashionable *perruquier* was tried on a very serious charge. He was

defended by the talented Serjeant, who was quite convinced the man was innocent. But, alas, he was confronted by a weeping and charming young lady of prepossessing appearance, who touched the hearts of the jury " and their common sense was washed out. He was convicted and sentenced to a long term of transportation which was, however, subsequently remitted." Now comes a humorous side of this incident. The wife of the Governor of New South Wales happened to be home in England on a visit. Having heard of this case, and that the poor hairdresser was banished to Australia in a convict ship, and about to be recalled, she implored the Home Secretary to carry out the sentence, and not respite the man, as there was " not a decent hairdresser in the colony."

Lucky is the criminal who commits his or her crime on the north side of the Tweed. The Scotch Courts are notorious for letting off criminals. The " Not proven " verdict covers a multitude of crimes and lets off many a rogue. Even in our day notorious cases have happened of absolute miscarriages of justice which any other Court except those under Scottish jurisdiction would have ended otherwise, there being no shadow of doubt whatever of guilt.

As a lecturer I have always found Scottish audiences bright, quick and ready to see a joke. That old saying that it takes a surgical operation to get a joke into a Scotchman's head is a libel. I never—from my own experience—could see any reason for it. I really think what was intended is—it takes a surgical operation to

get a proper verdict into a Scotchman's head. They are witty, no doubt, and it is the natural wit of the Scot that makes him only see the humorous side of crime, and his " Not proven " is his judicial joke.

One cannot, of course, refer to recent cases, those let off by the Scotch jokist being still alive, so I must fall back upon the well-known story of Madeleine Smith, who without doubt poisoned her husband to marry a man she was in love with—one of the simplest cases ever brought into court, and perhaps the most notorious case in which a woman was concerned in the Victorian era.

Madeleine Smith was a very beautiful and attractive young lady, her father being a man of position in Glasgow as an architect. Yet with any number of suitors of her own class this pretty creature became infatuated with a common, ill-shapen, insignificant workman from Jersey engaged in some big Glasgow firm. He was mean, cruel and unkind, but had the high-sounding name of Pierre Emile l'Angelier. Whether the couple were actually married or not was not decided—by that farce of marriage acknowledged as legal in Scotland, they were. She wrote to him as, " my own darling husband," and she was evidently in fear of the miserable L'Angelier and completely under his influence.

An enamoured rich Glasgow merchant proposing marriage to Madeleine, she tried to break off with L'Angelier, but he refused in a brutal way and said that so long as he lived she could not marry another. Madeleine then made it up with him, and not long after he

MADELEINE SMITH

was found nearly dead, writhing in agony in his room, after drinking a cup of chocolate, which he said she had given him. He recovered, and later she went to the Bridge of Allan with her people and the rich merchant she wanted to marry. She was followed by L'Angelier. They returned to Glasgow, and so did L'Angelier. She wrote him to come and see her, and he, leaving his house, told his landlady he would return late. In the early hours of the next morning the landlady was awakened by L'Angelier's violent ringing at the street bell; he had had something else to disagree with him, for he was again writhing in pain and he died directly afterwards.

Madeleine fled. She was brought back. The body of L'Angelier was exhumed and poison discovered.

Madeleine had bought quantities of that poison "for her complexion." She also tried to purchase arsenic a day or two before the crime.

L'Angelier had never bought any. He was seen near the Smiths' house the night he died.

All this and more came to light in Court; her letters, and what did not come to light—for the judge sat upon it—was L'Angelier's notebook (not admissible, the judge said, as the entries were in pencil!), in which there was an entry that he had an engagement with Madeleine the night the crime was committed.

"Not proven" was the Scottish joke.

Then, be it remembered, Madeleine was beautiful. She also dressed for the part, and played it magnificently.

She looked more bewitching every day.

L'Angelier, on the other hand, was a beast.

The Scottish are a very susceptible nation.

The Scottish are also a very sensitive nation, for when these brief remarks of mine were published in a popular magazine—even briefer than given here—every post brought me letters of protest from every class of Scotchman from nearly every part of the inhabited globe. With few exceptions these correspondents, who claim to be better acquainted with the subject than the writer, admit that Madeleine Smith poisoned L'Angelier, but are terribly indignant at my saying she murdered her husband. Now if there is a joke Scotchmen have got into their heads and cannot get out of them it is—What is marriage? On this point apropos of Madeleine Smith, a distinguished Scotch advocate trained and practised in the law—who was present at the trial—gave it as his opinion, unhesitatingly expressed, there could be no shadow of doubt that Madeleine was L'Angelier's wife by the law of Scotland. This I find in an exhaustive and serious work written by the greatest expert in criminal matters of our time—and it is a statement of fact quite good enough for me. Observe that both Madeleine and L'Angelier were in the habit of addressing each other as husband and wife—observe that she often addressed this man as "my own darling husband," and observe what that means in Scotland. So much for marriage—now for the other joke, "Not proven."

The reason the charge failed was that it was not established that Madeleine was in L'Angelier's company the night of his death. Yet the wretched man's notebook was put in at the trial to show that he was. The judge,

Lord Fullerton, however, ruled it out, because the entry had been made in pencil! This entry, if not "ruled out," would have hanged her.

"Not proven," in this and all other Scotch cases I have studied, means "you have done it, of that we are convinced, but, the young man you shot was a noodle, the man you poisoned was a brute, the old lady you strangled was a hag—Madeleine is so pretty!" and so on.

I am sorry to dwell on the case of Madeleine Smith—more has been written about her than any other woman who ever stood in a dock. I have not revived it—nearly every book dealing with crime refers to it. I bought one only the other day—and Madeleine was tried when I was twelve. But dealing as I am with the notorious women of the Victorian era, I cannot well leave her out. Is there any one acquainted with the facts bold enough to say that in her case "Not proven" really meant "Not guilty"? "Not proven" when the judge held back the one piece of evidence necessary to hang her! "Not proven" when one knows how her own counsel acted towards her—in the hour of her triumph. Her counsel was then the Dean of Faculty, Inglis—afterwards a Scottish judge. Madeleine proffered her hand to Inglis to express her gratitude to him, but he declined to shake hands with her—"Thus showing," my Scotch correspondent who is old enough to remember the trial and the details of it adds, "what he thought of the client whose life he had saved."

We have seen in this case of Madeleine Smith how

much depends upon personal appearance in the dock, the bewitching poke bonnet of her time, hiding her pretty face from the gaze of the vulgar crowd at the back of the Court, framed, as it were, to be seen by judge, counsel and jury, in front, partly throwing into shade her face when she turned from one to the other, and, when she bent down, hiding it like the vizor of a knight altogether. Of later day, the matinée hat of huge proportions, that wonderful creation of the milliner's art, called forth admiration from the Bench and the Bar or—more important still—from the jury-box.

It is now a hundred years ago since a Lord Chief Justice, the famous Sir Edward Coke, laid down the law that a lady in the prisoner's dock must remove her hat. The judge and the prisoner had a little argument on the point and, considering it was a case of murder, no less a trial than the murder of Sir Thomas Overbury, most surely it was an important event. The lady was Ann Turner by name, the widow of a physician, and she was indicted for being an accessory before the fact to the murder.

Sir Edward Coke commanded her to remove her hat, saying "a woman might be covered in Church, but not when arraigned in a court of justice." To this the lady replied that she thought it strange that she might be covered in the House of God, and not in the judicature of man. To this the judge replied, "that from the Highest no secrets were hid, but that it was not so with man, whose intellect is weak; therefore, in the investigation of truth, and especially when the lives of

our fellow-creatures were in jeopardy, on the charge of having deprived another thereof, the court should see all the obstacles removed; and because the countenance is often an index to the mind, all covering should be removed from the face."

The Lord Chief and the lady had further argument, but in the end the hat had to go. The lady, however, tied up her head in her handkerchief.

The trial and conviction of Mrs. Osborne, formerly Miss Ethel Florence Elliot, for larcency and perjury, following upon a dramatic interlude during an action she brought against Major and Mrs. Hargreaves for slander, in charging her with stealing jewels while their guest at Torquay, provided one of the most sensational society trials of the last decade of the Victorian period. Mrs. Osborne's appearance in court as a persecuted innocent, her brazen assurance in endeavouring, through her legal representatives, to fasten the guilt on an innocent person, the discomfiture of Major Hargreaves, a simple, good-natured, honest man, who was no good as a witness, and made a woeful exhibition under cross-examination, were all phases in a comedy which developed in a startling manner.

The public was in doubt as to whether the woman was not really innocent. Then information reached the judge (Justice Denman), and the trial was suspended. The closing scenes were semi-tragic; appeal was made for leniency on behalf of the confessed perjured thief, and she got off with nine months' imprisonment. Sentiment goes a long way with some people, and sentiment

misled many in the early days of the affair; there is no comedy without sentiment, and Mrs. Osborne provided this sentiment because she was a clever actress. She was only a mummer; had she been a dramatist or even a concocter of penny novelettes she would have taken care to have more artfully concealed the sale of the stolen jewels and her subsequent transactions in cashing the cheque and bank-notes.

By the way, a little comedy was wrapt up in the last days of liberty of the murderess, Mrs. Manning. An attractive-looking woman who paid much attention to dress and carried herself with a certain air of distinction, she, after separating from her partner in crime, sought an asylum in Scotland, whither she fled under an assumed name. Travelling alone, first class, she had as a companion from a Midland town a well-built, smart and impressionable young fellow of good position. The woman, vain to a degree, was delighted to have one upon whom she could so easily assert her powers of fascination, and her conquest was quick. The young fellow fell desperately in love with the woman. She threw herself, being lonely and journeying to a strange destination, upon his protection. He readily accorded her that privilege, and was happy. The couple crossed the Border, and stayed together in Glasgow.

Then followed the arrest. The sensation of the impressionable victim on realizing how Fate had cruelly associated him with one of the worst women of her time can only be imagined.

This leads me to refer to the dark comedy which came

MRS. MANNING
THE MURDERESS
FASCINATING A
STRANGER IN A
TRAIN WHILE
ESCAPING FROM
ARREST

to light as a result of the prosecution of Mrs. Maybrick. Had not the charge been brought against the woman, there is little doubt the dark incident which was subsequently brought to light in her career would never have been heard of. Folly plays queer tricks, and the liaison in which the accused woman was concerned was one of her curious ways of treating things—even a charge of murder. As in the case of Mrs. Manning, the other party must have had some unpleasant thoughts after the exposé.

It appears it is no use arguing with female prisoners. Griffiths, Guillot and others, English and foreign experts in prison life, assert that the official has no moral weight, but simply wastes time preaching to them. He is simply looked upon as one performing a duty for which he is paid. Visitors, unofficial, may have some influence for good, but Major Griffiths maintained that inexperienced visitors are so easily misled; "they may be subjected to so much imposture by designing hypocrites who can assume any mood, and their aid is more often mischievous than beneficial." Yet in his *Secrets of the Prison-House* he lets out one secret which rather shows that an experienced visitor can outwit the officials and thus be more mischievous than any well-meaning amateur.

This story is a true comedy in prison life—a parallel episode we find in the most dramatic book Dickens wrote, *A Tale of Two Cities*, but in that men perform; here we have women.

One day a mid-Victorian lady of title, well known for

her philanthropy and kindness to all her retainers, discovered that the daughter of her coachman had stolen a horse out of her stable, and had been imprisoned.

The culprit was arrested when endeavouring to sell the horse—a valuable one—for five pounds. The horse-dealer, being suspicious, retained the horse and sent for the police. The horse-dealer was a good judge of a horse and knew such a fine, spirited animal—which had been galloped ten miles or more—was worth more than the lad riding it asked. However, he was not much of a judge of human flesh, for he did not detect the groom on the horse was a young girl. It was only when she was within the gaol and took her hat off—thus letting her long hair down—and *cried* that she gave herself away.

This female Dick Turpin caused quite a stir in the women's wing of Harchester Gaol. The prisoners admired the new-comer's pluck, and a gipsy girl in addition admired her crime, and eventually, hobnobbing with her, became her pal and her evil genius. They arranged future escapades which they would jointly carry out when they were free. Maimie Popple (the gipsy girl), however, was released from gaol several months before Josephine (Jo, the horse-stealer) could be liberated. She was not even tried yet, and the poor Josephine, full of spirit, enterprise and devilment, had to roll herself up in the corner of her cell and curse her fate in solitude. She had asked Maimie to call at Crewkerne Hall, see the dear philanthropic Lady Sarah Furnival, and intercede for her. It was not many days

before Lady Sarah drove up to the gaol. She sent in her card to the Governor with an urgent request to see Josephine, her coachman's daughter.

The visit of the popular Lady Sarah Furnival caused great excitement among the officials of the prison, the Governor himself, hat in hand, ushered the aristocratic lady in. She was richly dressed in a long sealskin, smart bonnet and the newest gloves. Her veil was down.

"I wish to see Josephine alone. Against the rules? But in *my* case you will make an exception? I want to speak to her, reason with her, console her as best I can, and for that I must be alone with her."

Her appeal was irresistible, reluctantly the Governor granted it. He bowed her out of his room to the corridor, where she was met by bowing turnkeys and warders. The matron and assistant warder followed her ladyship into the cell. Luckily they did, for no sooner had Josephine realized who her visitor was than she had violent convulsions, kicking all over the floor. The matron at the earnest request of the distressed Lady Bountiful rushed off for assistance, and came back with the doctor, just as the aristocrat, anxious to escape from such a heart-rending scene and the unpleasant surroundings of the prison, walked out, every one flying to pay her all the attention they could till she was safely in her carriage, and driven off.

The Governor, matron and officials generally, including "the Major"—though he does not relate the story as happening to himself—must have looked very foolish

when they discovered the prisoner recovering from convulsions in her cell was none other than the gipsy, Maimie Popple, and the "Lady" they had just bowed out was Josephine! They had exchanged clothes—the clothes *were* Lady Sarah Furnival's, for Maimie had stolen them the night before from Crewkerne Hall—thus freeing Josephine, who might have had years in prison; and, knowing she herself for this trick would only get six months at the most, and then be free to join Josephine, she had carried the affair off with a light heart.

Perhaps one of the most extraordinary products from Scotland was Lord Campbell, who, although born on the banks of the coal-black Tyne at Newcastle, was, like so many other legal luminaries, the son of a Scotch minister. He arrived in the great metropolis in the year 1800, having taken six days in a mail-coach, ignoring the advice of a friend, for him to break his journey at York to take breath, "as several persons who had gone through without stopping had died of apoplexy from the rapidity of the motion." With eighteenpence in his pocket he started life in London as a theatrical critic to a morning paper, but twenty years afterwards he married, like the judge in *Trial by Jury*, a rich attorney's "elderly ugly daughter," and his fortune was made. He was utterly disliked by the Bar, though admired for his learning and skill as a lawyer. He was harsh and irritable, and crushed all the life out of any rising young barrister for whom he had no mercy. No prisoner or lawyer ever took a rise out of him, but it is on record that when

"LADY SARAH FURNIVAL"

he had finished his brilliant career on the bench and entered into the sanctity of the House of Lords, and sat there with Lord Brougham and others, he found himself the cynosure of all eyes, and of no less a person than Miss Strickland, the popular authoress of the *Lives of the Queens of England*, who, for some reason, had accused the ex-Lord Chancellor, in furious letters she had written to the papers, of plagiarism.

Serjeant Ballantine refers to the incident as related to him by Charles Phillips (whom I refer to in another place). Lord Brougham in the House of Lords pointed out to him an elderly female in a poke bonnet standing at the bar, and gleefully told him that the old lady standing there was waiting to vent her rage upon Campbell. "However, he will escape by the back way," said the wily Brougham, chuckling at the evident discomfiture of his fellow-countryman; but Campbell did nothing of the sort, and relates the occurrence in his own words as follows:

"My exploit in the House of Lords last night was introducing myself to Miss Strickland, authoress of the *Lives of the Queens of England*, who has been writing a violent letter against me in the newspapers. After I had conversed with her for half an hour, she exclaimed, 'Well, Lord Campbell, I do declare you are the most amiable man I ever met with.' I thought Lord Brougham would have died with envy when I told him the result of my interview; and Ellenborough, who was sitting by, rubbed his hands in admiration. Brougham had thrown me a note across the table saying, 'Do you know

that your friend, Miss Strickland, is come to hear you?'"

This hard-hearted Lord Campbell thus showed that, like Sir Pertinax MacSycophant, "booing" and politeness cost nothing and meant much. What it meant in the case of Lord Campbell when he was on the Bench is best illustrated by the following true anecdote. He was trying some criminal in a very important case. The severe judge had bowed to the court, sat down, and as the counsel was opening the case against the miserable man in the dock Campbell's fierce eyes were fixed upon the prisoner. After a time, with great suavity of manner, his lordship said, as he waved his hand to the dock, "Let the prisoner be accommodated with a chair." The crier of the court turned round to a friend and said, "He means to hang him," and he did!

Women—particularly those living the life of an adventuress—are proverbially quick-witted, perhaps more so than men of the same class, so that for a woman sharper to be outwitted by another of her sex is a rare occurrence. Among the "I.D.B.s" (Illicit Diamond Buyers) in South Africa are many women, the associates of the I.D.B. gang, who aid the smuggling of the diamond.

Some years ago, two of the ladies, fashionably dressed, drove up to a small hotel at Kimberley, and had lunch; they were alone in the room, and could not resist a look at their ill-gotten gains. They had no sooner spread the fine diamonds on the table, from which the landlady had just removed the luncheon things, when she returned to brush the table-cloth, or remove it. Just as she caught

I. D. B. S

sight of the diamonds, she heard the tramping of horses, and, looking out, observed detectives from the mines hurrying into the hotel. They were accompanied by two women searchers, so the landlady knew that their prey was in the room. In an instant, in the most natural way, the quick-witted landlady—who evidently saw her chance—swept off the table-cloth and walked away. The detectives entered. The two ladies were searched; nothing was found upon them, so the police departed. The two ladies rang the bell, and asked the landlady for the diamonds. "What diamonds?"

"Those we left on the cloth."

"Nonsense," quietly replied the landlady. "They were only breadcrumbs."

I think it can be seriously claimed that the notoriously bad women of the Victorian era were, together with those who practised literature, art, music and the drama, of a much stronger fibre than those of to-day.

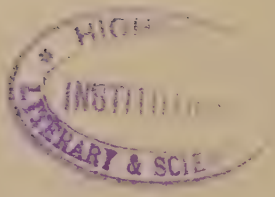
It was a great time—by that I mean a propitious time—for those eager to grasp life with both hands. There were vast schemes, activity, and natural resources stirring the very atmosphere.

Those born since seem to lack the same broad vision, their perspective is wrong, their sense of proportion defective, they appear to regard most things with one eye, and off they go at a tangent, harming themselves and their "Causes" through sheer wrong-headedness.

I could, of course, add many pages on the subject of this chapter proportionate to those dealing with women good, and women indifferent. But, as so many of these

cases must be still fresh in the memory of my readers, it is not necessary. I have written at sufficient length, I believe, to emphasise the fact, that Bad Women were quite as notorious as the Good and the Cleverly Virtuous, in the days of Queen Victoria.

THE END



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